

*John & Chapman*

HISTORY

*1824*

OF THE

UNITED STATES,

FROM THEIR

FIRST SETTLEMENT AS ENGLISH COLONIES,

IN 1607, TO THE YEAR 1808,

OR

THE THIRTY-THIRD OF THEIR SOVEREIGNTY AND  
INDEPENDENCE.

—◆—  
BY DAVID RAMSAY, M. D.

—◆—  
CONTINUED TO THE TREATY OF GHENT,  
BY S. S. SMITH, D. D. AND L. L. D.  
AND OTHER LITERARY GENTLEMEN.  
—◆—

IN THREE VOLUMES.

—◆—  
VOL. II.

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.....  
1816.





**HISTORY**

OF THE

**UNITED STATES.**



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*John A. ...*  
*Alexandria, Va.*  
*A.D. 1824*  
PREFACE

TO VOLUME THE SECOND.

THE contents of this volume are, substantially, an improved new edition of my History of the American Revolution, published first in 1789. This was, then, the only work of the kind, published in America, or written by an American. It was introduced to the public, by the following preface:

“The materials for the following sheets were collected, in the year 1782, 1783, 1785, and 1786; in which years, as a member of congress, I had access to all the official papers of the United States. Every letter, written to congress by general Washington, from the day he took the command of the American army, till he resigned it, was carefully perused, and its contents noted. The same was done with the letters of the other general officers, ministers of congress, and others in public stations. It was intended to have enlarged the work by the insertion of state papers, as proofs and illustrations of my positions. This I could easily have done, and shall do at a future time, and in a separate work, if the public require it. At present I thought it prudent to publish little more than a simple narrative of events, without introducing my authorities. Several of these are already in my *History of the Revolution of South Carolina*, and such as are printed

PREFACE.

may be found in the periodical publications of the day. I have endeavoured to give much original matter at a small expense. As I write about recent events, known to thousands, as well as myself, proofs are, at present, less necessary than they will be in future.

“ I appeal to the actors in the great scenes which I have described, for the substantial truth of my narrative. Intentional misrepresentations, I am sure there are none. If there be any from other sources, I trust they will be found in small circumstances, not affecting the substance.

“ *October 20, 1789.*”

Since that publication, many of the manuscript documents, in the office of the secretary of the old congress, from which it was compiled, have been published, and have supported the statements of facts therein contained. The former edition being out of print, a new one is here given with much important matter, since collected. Connected, as it now is, with the previous colonial history of the United States, and their history, subsequent to the revolution, the whole gives a connected view of our history, from the first settlement of our portion of the North American continent, to the end of 1808.

DAVID RAMSAY.

*Charleston, S. C.*  
*Dec. 31st, 1808.*

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# HISTORY

## OF THE

### AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

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#### CHAPTER VII.

*Consequences in America, resulting from the preceding transactions of Parliament; and of the commencement of Hostilities.*

THE year 1774 terminated with an expectation in America, that a few months would bring them a redress of their grievances. But the probability of that event daily diminished. The colonists had indulged themselves in an expectation that the people of Great Britain, from a consideration of the dangers and difficulties of a war with their colonies, would, in their elections, have preferred those who were friends to peace and a reconciliation. But when they were convinced of the fallacy of these hopes, they turned their attention to the means of self-defence. It had been the resolution of many never to submit to the operation of the late acts of parliament. Their number daily increased; and in the same proportion that Great Britain determined to enforce, did they determine to oppose. Intelligence of the rejection of lord Chatham's bill, of the address of both houses of parliament to the king on the 9th of February, and of the fishery bill, arrived among the colonists, about the same time, and diminished what remained of their first hopes of a speedy accommodation. The fishery bill excited a variety of emotions. The obvious tendency of it was to starve thousands. The



severity of it did not strike an Englishman, for he viewed it as a merited correction for great provincial offences. But it appeared in the blackest colours to an American, who felt no consciousness of guilt, and who fancied that heaven approved his zeal in defence of liberty. It alienated the affections of the colonists, and produced in the breasts of thousands, a hatred of Great Britain.

The penal acts of parliament in 1774, were all levelled against Massachusetts; but the fishery bill extended to New Hampshire, Connecticut and Rhode Island. The reasons assigned for this by lord North were, that they had aided and abetted their offending neighbours, and were so near to them that the intentions of parliament would be frustrated, unless they were in like manner comprehended in the proposed restraints. The extension of this penal statute to three additional provinces, operated powerfully in favour of union, and convinced the most moderate, of the increasing necessity for all the provinces to make a common cause in their opposition. Whatever might be the designs of parliament, their acts had a natural tendency to enlarge the demands of the Americans, and to cement their confederacy, by firm principles of union. At first they only claimed exemption from internal taxation; but by the combination of the East India company and the British ministry, an external tax was made to answer all the purposes of a direct internal tax. They, therefore, in consistence with their own principles, were constrained to deny the right of taxing in any form for a supply. Nothing could contribute more to make the colonists deny the parliamentary claim of internal legislation, than the manner in which it was exercised, in depriving them of their charters, and passing an act relative to trials, which promised indemnity to murderers. This convinced them that an opposition to so injurious a claim was essentially necessary to their security. But they still admitted the power of parliament to bind their trade. This was conceded by congress only a few months before an act passed, that they should have no foreign trade, nor be allowed to fish on their own coasts. The British ministry by their successive

acts, impelled the colonists to believe, that while the mother country retained any authority over them, that authority would, in some shape or other, be exerted so as to answer all the purposes of a power to tax. While Great Britain stretched that portion of controlling supremacy which the colonists were disposed to allow her, to such an extent as covered oppression equally grievous with that which they would not allow, the way was fast opening for a total renunciation of her sovereignty. The coercive measures adopted by the parent state, produced a disposition in the colonies to extend their claims: and the extension of their claims produced an increasing disposition in Great Britain to coerce them still more. The jealousy of liberty on one side, and the desire of supremacy on the other, were reciprocally cause and effect; and urged both parties, the one to rise in their demands, and the other to enforce submission. In the contest between Great Britain and her colonies, there had been a fatal progression from small to greater grounds of dissention. The trifling tax of 3d. per pound on tea, roused the jealous inhabitants of Boston to throw 340 chests of it into the ocean. This provoked the British parliament to shut up their port, and to new-model their charter. Statutes so unconstitutional and alarming, excited a combination in twelve of the colonies, to stop all trade with Great Britain, Ireland, and the West Indies. Their combination gave birth to the restraining acts of parliament, by which nine of the colonies were interdicted all other trade but that from which they had voluntarily excluded themselves; and four of these nine were further devoted to famine, by being forbidden to fish on their coasts. Each new resolution on the one side, and new act on the other, reciprocally gave birth to something from the opposing parties, that was more irritating or oppressive, than what had preceded.

The beginning of strife between the parent state and her colonies, was like the letting out of waters. From inconsiderable causes love was changed into suspicion, which gradually ripened into ill-will, and soon ended in hostility. Prudence, policy, and reciprocal interest, urged the expediency of

concession: but pride, false honour, and misconceived dignity, drew in an opposite direction. Undecided claims and doubtful rights, which under the influence of wisdom and humility might have been easily compromised, imperceptibly widened into an irreconcilable breach. Hatred at length took the place of kind affections, and the calamities of war were substituted, in lieu of the benefits of commerce.

From the year 1768, in which a military force had been stationed in Boston, there was a constant succession of insulting words, looks, and gestures. The inhabitants were exasperated against the soldiers, and they against the inhabitants. The former looked on the latter as the instruments of tyranny, and the latter on the former as seditious rioters, or fraudulent smugglers. In this irritable state, every incident, however trifling, made a sensible impression. The citizens apprehended constant danger from an armed force, in whose power they were. The soldiers on the other hand, considered themselves in the midst of enemies, and exposed to attacks from within and from without. In proportion as the breach between Great Britain and her colonies widened, the distrust and animosity between the people and the army increased. From the latter end of 1774, hostile appearances daily threatened that the flames of war would be kindled from the collision of such inflammable materials. Whatsoever was done by either party by way of precaution, for the purposes of self-defence, was construed by the other as preparatory to an intended attack. Each disclaimed all intentions of commencing hostilities, but reciprocally manifested suspicion of the other's sincerity. As far as was practicable without an open rupture, the plans of the one were respectively thwarted by the other. From every appearance it became daily more evident that arms must ultimately decide the contest. To suffer an army that was soon expected to be an enemy, quietly to fortify themselves, when the inhabitants were both able and willing to cut them off, appeared to some warm spirits the height of folly. But the prudence and moderation of others, and especially the advice and recommendation of congress, restrained their impetuosity. It was a fortunate circumstance



for the colonies that the royal army was posted in New England. The people of that northern country have their passions more under the command of reason and interest, than in the southern latitudes, where a warmer sun excites a greater degree of irascibility. One rash offensive action against the royal forces at this early period, though successful, might have done great mischief to the cause of America. It would have lost them European friends, and weakened the disposition of the other colonies to assist them. The patient and the politic New England men, fully sensible of their situation, submitted to many insults, and bridled their resentment. In civil wars or revolutions it is a matter of much consequence who strikes the first blow. The compassion of the world is in favour of the attacked, and the displeasure of good men on those who are the first to imbrue their hands in human blood. For the space of nine months after the arrival of general Gage, the behaviour of the people of Boston is particularly worthy of imitation, by those who wish to overturn established governments. They conducted their opposition with exquisite address. They avoided every kind of outrage and violence, preserved peace and good order among themselves, successfully engaged the other colonies to make a common cause with them, and counteracted general Gage so effectually as to prevent his doing any thing for his royal master, while by patience and moderation they skreened themselves from censure. Though resolved to bear as long as prudence and policy dictated, they were all the time preparing for the last extremity. They were furnishing themselves with arms and ammunition, and training their militia.

Provisions were also collected and stored in different places, particularly at Concord, about 20 miles from Boston. General Gage, though zealous for his royal master's interest, discovered a prevailing desire after a peaceable accommodation. He wished to prevent hostilities by depriving the inhabitants of the means necessary for carrying them on. With this view he determined to destroy the stores which he knew were collected for the support of a provincial army. Wishing to accomplish this without bloodshed, he took every

precaution to effect it by surprise, and without alarming the country. At eleven o'clock at night, April 18th, 1775, 800 grenadiers and light infantry, the flower of the royal army, embarked at the Common, landed at Phipps's farm, and marched for Concord, under the command of lieutenant colonel Smith. Neither the secrecy with which this expedition was planned, the privacy with which the troops marched out, nor an order that no one inhabitant should leave Boston, were sufficient to prevent intelligence from being sent to the country militia, of what was going forward. About two in the morning, 130 of the Lexington militia had assembled to oppose them, but intelligence respecting the regulars being uncertain, they were dismissed, with orders to appear again at beat of drum. They collected a second time to the number of 70, between four and five o'clock in the morning of the 19th, and the British regulars soon after made their appearance. Major Pitcairn, who led the advanced corps, rode up to them and called out: "Disperse, you rebels; throw down your arms, and disperse." They still continued in a body; on which he advanced nearer, discharged his pistol, and ordered his soldiers to fire. This was done with a huzza. A dispersion of the militia was the consequence; but the firing of the regulars was nevertheless continued. Individuals finding they were fired upon, though dispersing, returned the fire. Three or four of the militia were killed on the green. A few more were shot after they had begun to disperse. The royal detachment proceeded to Concord, and executed their commission. They disabled two 24 pounders, threw 500 lb. of ball into wells, and broke in pieces about 60 barrels of flour. Mr. John Butterick, of Concord, major of a minute regiment, not knowing what had passed at Lexington, ordered his men not to give the first fire, that they might not be the aggressors. Upon his approaching near the regulars, they fired, and killed captain Isaac Davis, and one private of the provincial minute men. The fire was returned, and a skirmish ensued. The king's troops having done their business, began their retreat towards Boston. This was conducted with expedition, for the adjacent inhabitants had

assembled in arms, and began to attack them in every direction. In their return to Lexington they were exceedingly annoyed, both by those who pressed on their rear, and others who pouring in from all sides, fired from behind stone walls, and such like coverts, which supplied the place of lines and redoubts. At Lexington the regulars were joined by a detachment of 900 men, under lord Piercy, which had been sent out by general Gage to support lieutenant colonel Smith. This reinforcement, having two pieces of cannon, awed the provincials, and kept them at a greater distance: but they continued a constant, though irregular and scattering fire, which did great execution. The close firing from behind the walls by good marksmen, put the regular troops in no small confusion, but they nevertheless kept up a brisk retreating fire on the militia and minute men. A little after sunset the regulars reached Bunker's-hill, worn down with excessive fatigue, having marched that day between thirty and forty miles. On the next day, they crossed Charlestown ferry, and returned to Boston.

There never were more than 400 provincials engaged at one time, and often not so many. As some tired and gave out, others came up and took their places. There was scarcely any discipline observed among them. Officers and privates fired when they were ready, or saw a royal uniform, without waiting for the word of command. Their knowledge of the country enabled them to gain opportunities by crossing fields and fences, and to act as flanking parties against the king's troops, who kept to the main road.

The regulars had 65 killed, 180 wounded, and 28 made prisoners. Of the provincials 50 were killed, and 38 wounded and missing.

As arms were to decide the controversy, it was fortunate for the Americans that the first blood was drawn in New England. The inhabitants of that country are so connected with each other by descent, manners, religion, politics, and a general equality, that the killing of a single individual interested the whole, and made them consider it as a common

cause. The blood of those who were killed at Lexington and Concord proved the firm cement of an extensive union.

To prevent the people within Boston from co-operating with their countrymen without, in case of an assault, which was now daily expected, general Gage agreed with a committee of the town, that upon the inhabitants lodging their arms in Faneuil-hall, or any other convenient place, under the care of the selectmen, all such inhabitants as were inclined, might depart from the town, with their families and effects. In five days after the ratification of this agreement, the inhabitants lodged 1778 musquets, 634 pistols, 273 bayonets and 38 blunderbusses. The agreement was well observed in the beginning: but after a short time obstructions were thrown in the way of its final completion, on the plea that persons who went from Boston to bring in the goods of those who chose to continue within the town, were not properly treated. Congress remonstrated on the infraction of the agreement, but without effect. The general, on a further consideration of the consequences of moving the whigs out of Boston, evaded it in a manner not consistent with good faith. He was in some measure compelled to adopt this dishonourable measure, from the clamor of the tories, who alleged that none but enemies to the British government were disposed to remove, and that when they were all safe with their families and effects, the town would be set on fire. To prevent the provincials from obtaining supplies which they much wanted, a quibble was made on the meaning of the word effects, which was construed by the general as not including merchandise. By this construction, unwarranted by every rule of genuine interpretation, many who quitted the town were deprived of their usual resources for support. Passports were not universally refused, but were given out very slowly: and the business was so conducted that families were divided; wives were separated from their husbands; children from their parents; and the aged and infirm from their relations and friends. The general discovered a disinclination to part with the women and children, thinking that, on their account, the



provincials would be restrained from making an assault on the town. The selectmen gave repeated assurances that the inhabitants had delivered up their arms; but, as a cover for violating the agreement, general Gage issued a proclamation, in which he asserted that he had full proof to the contrary. A few might have secreted some favourite arms; but nearly all the training arms were delivered up. On this flimsy pretence the general sacrificed his honour, to policy and the clamors of the tories. Contrary to good faith, he detained many, though fairly entitled by agreement to go out, and when he admitted the departure of others, he would not allow them to remove their families and effects.

The provincial congress of Massachusetts, which was in session at the time of the Lexington battle, dispatched an account of it to Great Britain, accompanied with many depositions, to prove that the British troops were the aggressors. They also made an address to the inhabitants of Great Britain, in which, after complaining of their sufferings, they say: "These have not yet detached us from our royal sovereign. We profess to be his loyal and dutiful subjects, and though hardly dealt with, as we have been, are still ready with our lives and fortunes, to defend his person, crown, and dignity. Nevertheless, to the persecution and tyranny of his evil ministry, we will not tamely submit. Appealing to heaven for the justice of our cause, we determine to die or be free." From the commencement of hostilities, the dispute between Great Britain and the colonies took a new direction.

Intelligence that the British troops had marched out of Boston into the country on some hostile purpose, being forwarded by expresses from one committee to another; great bodies of the militia, not only from Massachusetts but the adjacent colonies, grasped their arms and marched to oppose them. The colonies were in such a state of irritability, that the least shock in any part was, by a powerful and sympathetic affection, instantaneously felt throughout the whole. The Americans who fell were revered by their countrymen, as martyrs who had died in the cause of liberty. Resentment against the British burned more strongly than ever. Martial

rage took possession of the breasts of thousands. Combinations were formed, and associations subscribed, binding the inhabitants to one another by the sacred ties of honour, religion, and love of country, to do whatever their public bodies directed for the preservation of their liberties. Hitherto the Americans had no regular army. From principles of policy they cautiously avoided that measure, lest they might subject themselves to the charge of being aggressors. All their military regulations were carried on by their militia, and under the old established laws of the land. For the defence of the colonies, the inhabitants had been, from their early years, enrolled in companies, and taught the use of arms. The laws for this purpose had never been better observed than for some months previous to the Lexington battle. These military arrangements, which had been previously adopted for defending the colonies from hostile French and Indians, were on this occasion turned against the troops of the parent state. Forts, magazines, and arsenals, by the constitution of the country, were in the keeping of his majesty. Immediately after the Lexington battle, these were for the most part taken possession of throughout the colonies, by parties of the provincial militia. Ticonderoga, in which was a small royal garrison, was surprised and taken by adventurers from different states. Public money which had been collected in consequence of previous grants, was also seized for common services. Before the commencement of hostilities, these measures would have been condemned by the moderate even among the Americans: but that event justified a bolder line of opposition than had been adopted. Sundry citizens having been put to death by British troops, self preservation dictated measures which, if adopted under other circumstances, would have disunited the colonists. One of the most important of this kind was the raising an army. Men of warm tempers, whose courage exceeded their prudence, had for months urged the necessity of raising troops; but they were restrained by the more moderate, who wished that the colonies might avoid extremities, or at least that they might not lead in bringing them on. The provincial congress of Massa-

chusetts being in session at the time the battle of Lexington was fought, voted that "an army of 30,000 men be immediately raised; that 13,600 be of their own province; and that a letter and delegate be sent to the several colonies of New Hampshire, Connecticut and Rhode Island." In consequence of this vote, the business of recruiting was begun: and in a short time a provisional army was paraded in the vicinity of Boston, which, though far below what had been voted by the provincial congress, was much superior in numbers to the royal army. The command of this force was given to general Ward.

Had the British troops confined themselves to Boston, as before the 18th of April, the assembling an American army, though only for the purpose of observation and defence, would have appeared in the nature of a challenge; and would have made many less willing to support the people of Massachusetts: but after the British had commenced hostilities, the same measure was adopted without subjecting the authors of it to censure, and without giving offence or hazarding the union. The Lexington battle not only furnished the Americans with a justifying apology for raising an army, but inspired them with ideas of their own prowess. Amidst the most animated declarations of sacrificing fortune, and risking life itself for the security of American rights, a secret sigh would frequently escape from the breasts of her most determined friends, for fear that they could not stand before the bravery and discipline of British troops. Hoary sages would shake their heads, and say: "Your cause is good, and I wish you success: but I fear that your undisciplined valour must be overcome, in the unequal contest. After a few thousands of you have fallen, the provinces must ultimately bow to that power which has so repeatedly humbled France and Spain." So confident were the British of their superiority in arms, that they seemed desirous that the contest might be brought to a military decision. Some of the distinguished speakers in parliament had publicly asserted that the natives of America had nothing of the soldier in them, and that they were in no respect qualified to face a British army. European philoso-

phers had published theories, setting forth that not only vegetables and beasts, but that even men degenerated in the western hemisphere. Departing from the spirit of true philosophy, they overlooked the state of society in a new world, and charged a comparative inferiority, on every production that was American. The colonists themselves had imbibed opinions from their forefathers, that no people on earth were equal to those with whom they were about to contend. Impressed with high ideas of British superiority, and diffident of themselves, their best informed citizens, though willing to run all risks, feared the consequence of an appeal to arms. The success that attended their first military enterprize, in some degree banished these suggestions. Perhaps in no subsequent battle did the Americans appear to greater advantage than in their first essay at Lexington. It is almost without parallel in military history, for the yeomanry of a country to come forward in a single disjointed manner, without order, and for the most part without officers, and by an irregular fire, to put to flight troops equal in discipline to any in the world. In opposition to the bold assertions of some, and the desponding fears of others, experience proved that Americans might effectually resist British troops. The diffident grew bold in their country's cause, and indulged in cheerful hopes that heaven would finally crown their labours with success.

Soon after the Lexington battle, and in consequence of that event, not only the arms, ammunition, forts and fortifications in the colonies were secured for the use of the provincials: but regular forces were raised, and money struck for their support. These military arrangements were not confined to the New England states, but were general throughout the colonies. The determination of the king and parliament to enforce submission to their acts, and the news of the Lexington battle, came to the distant provinces nearly about the same time. It was supposed by many that the latter was in consequence of the former, and that general Gage had recent orders to proceed immediately to subdue the refractory colonists.



From a variety of circumstances the Americans had good reason to conclude that hostilities would soon be carried on vigorously in Massachusetts, and also to apprehend that, sooner or later, each province would be the theatre of war. "The more speedily therefore," said they, "we are prepared for that event, the better chance we have for defending ourselves." Previous to this period, or rather to the 19th April, 1775, the dispute had been carried on by the pen, or at most by associations and legislative acts; but from this time forward it was conducted by the sword. The crisis was arrived when the colonies had no alternative, but either to submit to the mercy, or to resist the power of Great Britain. An unconquerable love of liberty, could not brook the idea of submission; while reason, more temperate in her decisions, suggested to the people their insufficiency to make effectual opposition. They were fully apprized of the power of Britain; they knew that her fleets covered the ocean, and that her flag waved in triumph through the four quarters of the globe; but the animated language of the time was, "It is better to die freemen, than to live slaves." Though the justice of their cause, and the inspiration of liberty gave, in the opinion of disinterested judges, a superiority to the writings of Americans, yet in the latter mode of conducting their opposition, the candid among themselves acknowledged an inferiority. Their form of government was deficient in that decision, despatch, and coercion, which are necessary to military operations.

Europeans, from their being generally unacquainted with fire arms, are less easily taught the use of them than Americans, who are from their youth familiar with these instruments of war; yet on other accounts they are more susceptible of military habits. The proportion of necessitous men in the new world is small compared with that in the old.

To procure subsistence is a powerful motive with an European to enlist: and the prospect of losing it makes him afraid to neglect his duty; but these incitements to the punctual discharge of military services, are wanting in America. In old countries the distinction of ranks and the submission of

inferiors to superiors, generally takes place: but in the new world, an extreme sense of liberty and equality indisposes to that implicit obedience which is the soul of an army. The same causes which nurtured a spirit of independence in the colonies, were hostile to their military arrangements. It was not only from the different state of society in the two countries, but from a variety of local causes, that the Americans were not able to contend in arms, on equal terms, with their parent state. From the first settlement of the British colonies, agriculture and commerce, but especially the former, had been the favorite pursuits of their inhabitants. War was a business abhorrent from their usual habits of life. They had never engaged in it from their own motion, nor in any other mode than as appendages to British troops, and under British establishments. By these means the military spirit of the colonies had had no opportunity of expanding itself. At the commencement of hostilities, the British troops possessed a knowledge of the science and discipline of war, which could be acquired only by a long series of application, and substantial establishments. Their equipments, their artillery, and every other part of their apparatus for war approached perfection. To these important circumstances was added a high national spirit of pride, which had been greatly augmented by their successes in their last contest with France and Spain. On the other hand the Americans were undisciplined, without experienced officers, and without the shadow of military establishments. In the wars which had been previously carried on, in or near the colonies, the provincials had been, by their respective legislatures, frequently added to the British troops: but the pride of the latter would not consider the former, who were without uniformity of dress, or the pertness of military airs, to be their equals. The provincial troops were therefore for the most part, assigned to services which, though laborious, were not honorable.

The ignorance of British generals commanding in the woods of America, sometimes involved them in difficulties from which they had been more than once relieved by the superior local knowledge of the colonial troops. These ser-

vices were soon forgotten : and the moment the troops who performed them could be spared, they were disbanded. Such like obstacles had hitherto depressed military talents in America ; but they were now overcome by the ardour of the people.

In the year 1775, a martial spirit pervaded all ranks of men in the colonies. They believed their liberties to be in danger, and were generally disposed to risk their lives for their establishment. Their ignorance of the military art, prevented their weighing the chances of war with that exactness of calculation, which, if indulged, might have damped their hopes. They conceived that there was little more to do than fight manfully for their country. They consoled themselves with the idea, that though their first attempt might be unsuccessful ; their numbers would admit of a repetition of the experiment, till the invaders were finally exterminated. Not considering that in modern wars the longest purse decides oftener than the longest sword, they feared not the wealth of Britain. They both expected and wished that the whole dispute would be speedily settled in a few decisive engagements. Elevated with the love of liberty, and buoyed above the fear of consequences, by an ardent military enthusiasm, unabated by calculations above the extent, duration, or probable issue of the war, the people of America seconded the voice of their rulers, in an appeal to heaven for the vindication of their rights. At the time the colonies adopted these spirited resolutions, they possessed not a single ship of war, nor so much as an armed vessel of any kind. It had often been suggested that their seaport towns lay at the mercy of the navy of Great Britain ; this was both known and believed, but disregarded. The love of property was absorbed in the love of liberty. The animated votaries of the equal rights of human nature, consoled themselves with the idea that though their whole sea coast should be laid in ashes, they could retire to the western wilderness, and enjoy the luxury of being free ; on this occasion it was observed in congress, by Christopher Gadsden, one of the South Carolina delegates : “ Our houses being constructed of brick, stone, and

wood, though destroyed may be rebuilt: but liberty once gone is lost forever."

The sober discretion of the present age will more readily censure than admire, but can more easily admire than imitate the fervid zeal of the patriots of 1775 and 1776, who in idea sacrificed property in the cause of liberty, with the ease that they now sacrifice almost every other consideration for the acquisition of property.

The revenues of Britain were immense; and her people were habituated to the payment of large sums in every form which contributions to government have assumed. But the American colonies possessed neither money nor funds; nor were their people accustomed to taxes equal to the exigencies of war. The contest having begun about taxation, to have raised money by taxes for carrying it on, would have been impolitic. The temper of the times precluded the necessity of attempting the dangerous expedient; for such was the enthusiasm of the day, that the colonists gave up both their personal services and their property to the public, on the vague promises that they should at a future time be reimbursed. Without enquiring into the solidity of funds, or the precise period of payment, the resources of the country were commanded on general assurances, that all expenses of the war should ultimately be equalized. The parent state abounded with experienced statesmen and officers: but the dependent form of government exercised in the colonies, precluded their citizens from gaining that practical knowledge which is acquired from being at the head of public departments. There were very few in the colonies who understood the business of providing for an army, and still fewer who had experience and knowledge to direct its operations. The disposition of the finances of the country, and the most effectual mode of drawing forth its resources, were subjects with which scarce any of the inhabitants were acquainted. Arms and ammunition were almost wholly deficient; and though the country abounded with the materials of which they are manufactured, yet there was neither time nor artists enough to supply an army with the means of defence. The country was destitute



both of fortifications and engineers. Amidst so many discouragements, there were some flattering circumstances. The war could not be carried on by Great Britain, but at a great disadvantage, and at an immense expense. It was easy for ministers, at St. James's, to plan campaigns: but hard was the fate of the officer, from whom the execution of them, in the woods of America, was expected. The country was so extensive, and abounded so much with defiles, that, by evacuating and retreating, the Americans, though they could not conquer, yet might save themselves from being conquered. The authors of the acts of parliament, for restraining the trade of the colonies, were most excellent recruiting officers for congress. They imposed a necessity on thousands to become soldiers. All other business being suspended, the whole resources of the country were applied in supporting an army. Though the colonists were without discipline, they possessed native valour. Though they had neither gold nor silver, they possessed a mine, in the enthusiasm of their people. Paper, for upwards of two years, produced to them more solid advantages, than Spain derived from her superabounding precious metals. Though they had no ships to protect their trade or their towns, they had simplicity enough to live without the former, and enthusiasm enough to risk the latter; rather than submit to the power of Britain. They believed their cause to be just, and that heaven approved their exertions in defence of their rights. Zeal originating from such motives, supplied the place of discipline; and inspired a confidence and military ardour, which overleaped all difficulties.

Resistance being resolved upon by the Americans, the pulpit, the press, the bench and the bar, severally laboured to unite and encourage them. The clergy of New England were a numerous, learned and respectable body, who had a great ascendancy over the minds of their hearers. They connected religion and patriotism; and in their sermons and prayers, represented the cause of America, as the cause of heaven. The synod of New York and Philadelphia also sent forth a pastoral letter, which was publicly read in their churches. This earnestly recommended such sentiments and conduct,

as were suitable to their situation. Writers and printers followed in the rear of the preachers; and, next to them, had the greatest hand in animating their countrymen. Gentlemen, of the bench and of the bar, denied the charge of rebellion, and justified the resistance of the colonists. A distinction founded on law, between the king and his ministry, was introduced. The former, it was contended, could do no wrong. The crime of treason was charged on the latter; for using the royal name, to varnish their own unconstitutional measures. The phrase of a ministerial war became common; and was used, as a medium for reconciling resistance with allegiance.

Coeval with the resolutions for organizing an army, was one appointing the 20th day of July, 1775, a day of public humiliation, fasting and prayer to Almighty God; to bless their rightful sovereign king George; and to inspire him with wisdom to discern and pursue the true interest of his subjects; that the British nation might be influenced, to regard the things that belonged to her peace, before they were hid from her eyes; that the colonies might be ever under the care and protection of a kind providence, and be prospered in all their interests; that America might soon behold a gracious interposition of heaven, for the redress of her many grievances, the restoration of her invaded rights, a reconciliation with the parent state, on terms constitutional and honourable to both.\* The forces which had been collected in Massachusetts, were stationed in convenient places, for guarding the country, from further excursions of the regulars from Boston.

\* Since the fast of the Ninevites, recorded in sacred writ, perhaps there has not been one, which was more generally kept, with suitable dispositions, than that of July 20th, 1775. It was no formal service. The whole body of the people felt the importance, the weight and the danger of the unequal contest, in which they were about to engage; that every thing dear to them was at stake; and that a divine blessing only could carry them through it successfully. This blessing they implored with their whole souls, poured forth in ardent supplications, issuing from hearts deeply penetrated with a sense of their unworthiness, their dependence and danger; and at the same time, impressed with an humble confidence, in the mercies and goodness of that Being, who had planted and preserved them hitherto, amid many dangers, in the wilderness of a new world.

Breast-works were also erected in different places, for the same purpose. While both parties were attempting to carry off stock from the several islands, with which the bay of Boston is agreeably diversified, sundry skirmishes took place. These were of real service to the Americans. They habituated them to danger; and, perhaps, much of the courage of old soldiers, is derived from an experimental conviction, that the chance of escaping unhurt from engagements, is much greater than young recruits suppose.

About the latter end of May, a great part of the reinforcements ordered from Great Britain, arrived at Boston. Three British generals, Howe, Burgoyne and Clinton, whose behaviour in the preceding war, had gained them great reputation, arrived about the same time. General Gage, thus reinforced, prepared for acting with more decision: but, before he proceeded to extremities, he conceived it due to ancient forms, to issue a proclamation, holding forth to the inhabitants the alternative of peace or war. He therefore offered pardon, in the king's name, to all who should forthwith lay down their arms, and return to their respective occupations and peaceable duties: excepting only from the benefit of that pardon, "Samuel Adams, and John Hancock, whose offences were said to be of too flagitious a nature, to admit of any other consideration, than that of condign punishment." He also proclaimed, that not only the persons above-named and excepted, but, also, all their adherents, associates, and correspondents, should be deemed guilty of treason and rebellion; and treated accordingly. By this proclamation, it was also declared, "that as the courts of judicature were shut, martial law should take place, till a due course of justice should be re-established." It was supposed that this proclamation was a prelude to hostilities; and preparations were accordingly made by the Americans. A considerable height, by the name of Bunker's-hill, just at the entrance of the peninsula of Charlestown, was so situated as to make the possession of it, a matter of great consequence, to either of the contending parties. Orders were therefore issued, by the provincial commanders, that a detachment of a thousand men should in-

trench upon this height. By some mistake, Breed's-hill, high and large like the other, but situated nearer Boston, was marked out for the intrenchments, instead of Bunker's-hill. The provincials proceeded to Breed's hill; and worked with so much diligence, that between midnight and the dawn of the morning, they had thrown up a small redoubt about eight rods square. They kept such a profound silence, that they were not heard by the British, on board their vessels, though very near. These having derived their first information of what was going on, from the sight of the works, nearly completed, began an incessant firing upon them. The provincials bore this with firmness; and, though they were only young soldiers, continued to labour till they had thrown up a small breast-work, extending from the east side of the redoubt to the bottom of the hill. As this eminence overlooked Boston, general Gage thought it necessary to drive the provincials from it. About noon, therefore, he detached major general Howe and brig. general Pigot, with the flower of his army, consisting of four battalions, ten companies of the grenadiers and ten of light infantry, with a proportion of field artillery, to effect this business. These troops landed at Moreton's point, and formed after landing; but remained in that position, till they were reinforced by a second detachment of light infantry and grenadier companies, a battalion of land forces, and a battalion of marines, making in the whole, nearly 3000 men. While the troops, who first landed, were waiting for this reinforcement, the provincials for their further security, pulled up some adjoining post and rail fences, and set them down in two parallel lines, at a small distance from each other; and filled the space between with hay, which, having been lately mowed, remained on the adjacent ground.

The king's troops formed in two lines, and advanced slowly, to give their artillery time to demolish the American works. While the British were advancing to the attack, they received orders to burn Charlestown. These were not given, because they were fired upon from the houses in that town: but, from the military policy, of depriving enemies of a cover in



their approaches. In a short time, this ancient town, consisting of about 500 buildings, chiefly of wood, was in one great blaze. The lofty steeple of the meeting house formed a pyramid of fire above the rest, and struck the astonished eyes of numerous beholders, with a magnificent but awful spectacle. In Boston, the heights of every kind were covered with the citizens, and such of the king's troops, as were not on duty. The hills around the adjacent country, which afforded a safe and distinct view, were occupied by the inhabitants of the country.

Thousands, both within and without Boston, were anxious spectators of the bloody scene. The honour of British troops, beat high in the breasts of many; while others, with a keener sensibility, felt for the liberties of a great and growing country. The British moved on slowly; which gave the provincials a better opportunity for taking aim. The latter, in general, reserved themselves, till their adversaries were within ten or twelve rods: but then began a furious discharge of small arms. The stream of the American fire was so incessant, and did so great execution, that the king's troops retreated in disorder and precipitation. Their officers rallied them, and pushed them forward with their swords: but they returned to the attack with great reluctance. The Americans again reserved their fire, till their adversaries were near; and then put them a second time to flight. General Howe and the officers redoubled their exertions, and were again successful; though the soldiers discovered a great aversion to going on. By this time, the powder of the Americans began so far to fail, that they were not able to keep up the same brisk fire. The British then brought some cannon to bear, which raked the inside of the breast-works from end to end. The fire from the ships, batteries, and field artillery was redoubled; the soldiers in the rear were goaded on by their officers. The redoubt was attacked on three sides at once. Under these circumstances, a retreat from it was ordered: but the provincials delayed, and made resistance with their discharged muskets, as if they had been clubs, so long, that the

king's troops, who easily mounted the works, had half filled the redoubt, before it was given up to them.

While these operations were going on at the breast-work and redoubt, the British light infantry were attempting to force the left point of the former, that they might take the American line in flank. Though they exhibited the most undaunted courage, they met with an opposition which called for its greatest exertions. The provincials reserved their fire, till their adversaries were near; and then poured it upon the light infantry, with such an incessant stream, and in a direction so true, as mowed down their ranks. The engagement was kept up on both sides with great resolution. The persevering exertions of the king's troops could not compel the Americans to retreat, till they observed that their main body had left the hill. This, when begun, exposed them to new danger; for, it could not be effected, but by marching over Charlestown neck; every part of which was raked by the shot of the Glasgow man of war, and of two floating batteries. The incessant fire, kept up across this neck, prevented any considerable reinforcement, from joining their countrymen who were engaged: but the few, who fell on their retreat, over the same ground, proved that the apprehensions of those provincial officers, who declined passing over to succour their companions, were without any solid foundation.

The number of Americans engaged, amounted only to 1500. It was apprehended that the conquerors would push the advantage they had gained, and march immediately to American head quarters at Cambridge; but they advanced no further than Bunker's-hill. There, they threw up works, for their own security. The provincials did the same, on Prospect-hill, in front of them. Both were guarding against an attack; and both were in a bad condition to receive one. The loss of the peninsula depressed the spirits of the Americans; and the great loss of men produced the same effect on the British. There have been few battles in modern wars, in which, all circumstances considered, there was a greater destruction of men, than in this short engagement. The loss of the

British, as acknowledged by general Gage, amounted to 1054. Nineteen commissioned officers were killed, and 70 more were wounded. The battle of Quebec, in 1759, which gave Great Britain the province of Canada, was not so destructive to British officers, as this affair of a slight intrenchment, the work only of a few hours. That the officers suffered so much, must be imputed to their being aimed at. None of the provincials in this engagement were riflemen: but, they were all good marksmen. The whole of their previous military knowledge had been derived from hunting, and the ordinary amusements of sportsmen. The dexterity which, by long habit, they had acquired in hitting beasts, birds, and marks, was fatally applied to the destruction of British officers. From their fall, much confusion was expected. They were therefore particularly singled out. Most of those, who were near the person of general Howe, were either killed or wounded: but the general, though he greatly exposed himself, was unhurt. The light infantry and grenadiers lost three-fourths of their men. Of one company, not more than five, and of another, not more than fourteen escaped. The unexpected resistance of the Americans was such, as wiped away the reproach of cowardice, which had been cast on them, by their enemies in Britain. The spirited conduct of the British officers, merited and obtained great applause: but, the provincials were justly entitled to a large portion of the fame, for having made the utmost exertions of their adversaries necessary, to dislodge them from lines, which were the work only of a single night.

The Americans lost five pieces of cannon. Their killed amounted to 139: their wounded and missing to 314. Thirty of the former fell into the hands of the conquerors. They particularly regretted the death of general Warren. To the purest patriotism and most undaunted bravery, he added the virtues of domestic life, the eloquence of an accomplished orator, and the wisdom of an able statesman. A regard to the liberty of his country only, induced him to oppose the measures of government. He aimed not at a separation from, but a coalition with the mother country. He took an

active part in defence of his country; not that he might be applauded, and rewarded for a patriotic spirit: but, because he was, in the best sense of the word, a real patriot. Having no interested or personal views to answer, the friends of liberty confided in his integrity. The soundness of his judgment, and his abilities as a public speaker, enabled him to make a distinguished figure in public councils: but, his intrepidity and active zeal, induced his countrymen to place him in the military line. Within four days after he was appointed a major general, he fell a noble sacrifice to a cause, which he had espoused from the purest principles. Like Hamlden he lived, and like Hamlden he died; universally beloved, and universally regretted. His many virtues were celebrated in an elegant eulogium, written by Dr. Rush, in language equal to the illustrious subject.

The burning of Charlestown, though a place of great trade, did not discourage the provincials. It excited resentment and execration: but not any disposition to submit. Such was the high toned state of the public mind, and so great the indifference for property, when put in competition with liberty, that military conflagrations, though they distressed and impoverished, had no tendency to subdue the colonists. They might answer in the old world: but were not calculated for the new, where the war was undertaken, not for a change of masters, but for securing essential rights. The action at Breed's-hill, or Bunker's-hill, as it has been commonly called, produced many and very important consequences. It taught the British so much respect for Americans, intrenched behind works, that their subsequent operations were retarded with a caution, that wasted away a whole campaign, to very little purpose. It added to the confidence the Americans began to have in their own abilities; but inferences, very injurious to the future interests of America, were drawn from the good conduct of the new troops, on that memorable day. It inspired some of the leading members of congress, with such high ideas of what might be done by militia, or men engaged for a short term of enlistment, that it was long before they assented to the establishment of a permanent army. Not distinguish-



ing the continued exertions of an army, through a series of years, from the gallant efforts of the yeomanry of the country, led directly to action, they were slow in admitting the necessity of permanent troops. They conceived the country might be defended, by the occasional exertions of her sons, without the expense and danger of an army, engaged for the war. In the progress of hostilities, as will appear in the sequel, the militia lost much of their first ardour; while leading men in the councils of America, trusting to its continuance, neglected the proper time of recruiting, for a series of years. From the want of perseverance in the militia, and the want of a disciplined standing army, the cause for which arms were at first taken up, was more than once brought to the brink of destruction.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*The second Congress meets; organizes a regular Continental Army; makes sundry public addresses; petitions the king, &c. Transactions in Massachusetts.*

IT has already been mentioned, that congress, previous to its dissolution, on the 26th of October, 1774, recommended to the colonies, to choose members for another; to meet on the tenth of May, 1775; unless the redress of their grievances was previously obtained. A circular letter had been addressed by lord Dartmouth, to the several colonial governors, requesting their interference, to prevent the meeting of this second congress: but ministerial requisitions had lost their influence. Delegates were elected, not only for the twelve colonies, that were before represented, but also for the parish of St. John's, in Georgia; and, in July following, the whole province. The time of the meeting of this second congress, was fixed at so distant a day, that an opportunity might be afforded for obtaining information of the plans adopted by the British parliament, in the winter of 1774, 1775. Had these been favourable, the delegates would either not have met, or dispersed after a short session: but as the resolution was then fixed, to compel the submission of the colonies, and hostilities had already commenced, the meeting of congress, on the tenth of May, which was at first eventual, became fixed.

On their meeting, they chose Peyton Randolph, for their president, and Charles Thompson, for their secretary. On the next day, Mr. Hancock laid before them a variety of depositions, proving that the king's troops were the aggressors, in the late battle at Lexington, together with sundry papers relative to the great events, which had lately taken place in Massachusetts. Whereupon, congress resolved itself into a committee of the whole, to take into consideration the state of America. They proceeded in the same line of moderation

and firmness, which marked the acts of their predecessors in the past year.

The city and county of New York, having applied to congress, for advice how they should conduct themselves with regard to the troops they expected to land there; they were advised, “to act on the defensive, so long as might be consistent with their safety; to permit the troops to remain in the barracks, so long as they behaved peaceably: but not to suffer fortifications to be erected, or any steps to be taken for cutting off the communication between the town and country.” Congress also resolved: “That exportation to all parts of British America, which had not adopted their association, should immediately cease;” and that, “no provision of any kind, or other necessities, be furnished to the British fisheries, on the American coasts:” and, “that no bill of exchange, draft, or order, of any officer in the British army or navy, their agents or contractors, be received or negotiated, or any money supplied them, by any person in America; that no provisions or necessities of any kind, be furnished or supplied, to or for the use of the British army or navy, in the colony of Massachusetts Bay; that no vessel employed in transporting British troops to America, or from one part of North America, to another, or warlike stores or provisions for said troops, be freighted or furnished with provisions or any necessities.” These resolutions may be considered as the counterpart of the British acts for restraining the commerce, and prohibiting the fisheries of the colonies. They were calculated to bring distress on the British islands, in the West Indies; whose chief dependence for subsistence, was on the importation of provision, from the American continent. They also occasioned new difficulties in the support of the British army and fisheries. The colonists were so much indebted to Great Britain, that government bills for the most part found among them a ready market. A war in the colonies was therefore made subservient to commerce, by increasing the sources of remittance. This enabled the mother country, in a great degree, to supply her troops without shipping money out of the kingdom. From

the operation of these resolutions, advantages of this nature were not only cut off, but the supply of the British army, was rendered both precarious and expensive. In consequence of the interdiction of the American fisheries, great profits were expected, by British adventurers, in that line. Such frequently found it most convenient to obtain supplies in America, for carrying on their fisheries: but, as Great Britain had deprived the colonists of all benefits from that quarter, they now, in their turn, interdicted all supplies from being furnished to British fishermen. To obviate this unexpected embarrassment, several of the vessels, employed in this business, were obliged to return home, to bring out provisions, for their associates. These restrictive resolutions, were not so much the effect of resentment, as of policy. The colonists conceived, that by distressing the British commerce, they would increase the number of those, who would interest themselves in their behalf.

The new congress had convened but a few days, when their venerable president, Peyton Randolph, was under the necessity of returning home. On his departure, John Hancock, who had lately been proscribed, by general Gage, was unanimously chosen his successor. The objects of deliberation, presented to this new congress, were, if possible, more important than those which, in the preceding year, had engaged the attention of their predecessors. The colonists had now experienced the inefficacy of those measures, from which relief had been formerly obtained. They found a new parliament disposed to run all risks in compelling their submission. They also understood, that administration was united against them, and its members firmly established in their places. Hostilities were commenced. Reinforcements had arrived; and more were daily expected. Added to this, they had information, that their adversaries had taken measures to secure the friendship and co-operation of the Indians and Canadians.

The coercion of the colonies being resolved upon, and their conquest supposed to be inevitable, the British ministry judged, that it would be for the interest of both countries,



to proceed in that vigorous course, which promised the speediest attainment of their object. They hoped, by pressing the colonists on all quarters, to intimidate opposition, and ultimately to lessen the effusion of human blood.

In this awful crisis, congress had only a choice of difficulties. The New England states had already organized an army, and blockaded general Gage. To desert them, would have been contrary to plighted faith, and to sound policy. To support them, would make the war general, and involve all the provinces, in one general promiscuous state of hostility. The resolution of the people in favour of the latter was fixed; and only wanted public sanction for its operation. Congress therefore resolved: "that for the express purpose of defending and securing the colonies, and preserving them in safety, against all attempts to carry the late acts of parliament into execution, by force of arms, they be immediately put in a state of defence: but, as they wished for a restoration of the harmony, formerly subsisting between the mother country and the colonies, to the promotion of this most desirable reconciliation, an humble and dutiful petition be presented to his majesty." To resist, and to petition, were coeval resolutions. As freemen, they could not tamely submit: but as loyal subjects, wishing for peace, as far as was compatible with their rights, they once more, in the character of petitioners, humbly stated their grievances, to the common father of the empire. To dissuade the Canadians from co-operating with the British, they again addressed them; representing the pernicious tendency of the Quebec act, and apologizing for their taking Ticonderoga, and Crown-Point, as measures which were dictated by the great law of self-preservation. About the same time, congress took measures for warding off the danger, that threatened their frontier inhabitants from the Indians. Commissioners to treat with them, were appointed; and a supply of goods for their use was ordered. A talk was also prepared by congress, and transmitted to them, in which the controversy between Great Britain and her colonies was explained in a familiar Indian style. They were told, that they had no con-

cern in the family quarrel; and were urged by the ties of ancient friendship, and a common birth place, to remain at home; keep their hatchet buried deep; and to join neither side.

The novel situation of Massachusetts, made it necessary for the ruling powers of that province, to ask the advice of congress, on a very interesting subject: "the taking up and exercising the powers of civil government." For many months, they had been kept together, in tolerable peace and order, by the force of ancient habits; under the simple style of recommendation and advice from popular bodies, invested with no legislative authority. But, as war now raged in their borders, and a numerous army was actually raised, some more efficient form of government became necessary. At this early day, it neither comported with the wishes, nor the designs of the colonists, to erect forms of government independent of Great Britain. Congress, therefore, recommended only such regulations, as were immediately necessary; and these were conformed, as near as possible, to the spirit and substance of the charter; and were only to last, till a governor, of his majesty's appointment, would consent to govern the colony according to its charter.

On the same principles of necessity, another assumption of new powers became unavoidable. The great intercourse that daily took place throughout the colonies, pointed out the propriety of establishing a general post-office. This was accordingly done; and Dr. Franklin, who had, by royal authority, been dismissed from a similar employment, about three years before, was appointed by his country, the head of the new department.

While congress was making arrangements for their proposed continental army, it was thought expedient, once more to address the inhabitants of Great Britain, and to publish to the world a declaration setting forth their reasons, for taking up arms; to address the speaker and gentlemen of the assembly of Jamaica, and the inhabitants of Ireland; and also to prefer a second humble petition to the king. In their address to the inhabitants of Great Britain, they again vindicated

themselves, from the charge of aiming at independency; professed their willingness to submit to the several acts of trade and navigation, which were passed before the year 1763; recapitulated their reasons for rejecting lord North's conciliatory motion; stated the hardships they suffered, from the operations of the royal army in Boston; and insinuated the danger that the inhabitants of Britain would be in, of losing their freedom, in case their American brethren were subdued.

In their declaration, setting forth the causes and necessity of their taking up arms, they enumerated the injuries they had received, and the methods taken by the British ministry to compel their submission; and then said: "we are reduced to the alternative of choosing an unconditional submission to the tyranny of irritated ministers, or resistance by force. The latter is our choice. We have counted the cost of this contest, and find nothing so dreadful as voluntary slavery." They asserted, "that foreign assistance was undoubtedly attainable." This was not founded on any private information, but was an opinion derived from their knowledge of the principles of policy, by which states usually regulate their conduct towards each other.

In their address to the speaker and gentlemen of the assembly of Jamaica, they dilated on the arbitrary systems of the British ministry; and informed them, that, in order to obtain a redress of their grievances, they had appealed to the justice, humanity, and interest, of Great Britain. They stated, that to make their schemes of non-importation and non-exportation, produce the desired effects, they were obliged to extend them to the islands. "From that necessity, and from that alone, said they, our conduct has proceeded." They concluded with saying: "the peculiar situation of your island forbids your assistance; but we have your good wishes. From the good wishes of the friends of liberty and mankind, we shall always derive consolation."

In their address to the people of Ireland, they recapitulated their grievances; stated their humble petitions, and the neglect with which they had been treated. "In defence of our persons and properties under actual violations, said they, we

have taken up arms. When that violence shall be removed, and hostilities cease on the part of the aggressors, they shall cease on our part also."

These several addresses were executed in a masterly manner, and were well calculated to make friends to the colonies. But their petition to the king, which was drawn up at the same time, produced more solid advantages in favour of the American cause, than any other of their productions. This was in a great measure carried through congress by Mr. Dickinson. Several members, judging from the violence with which parliament proceeded against the colonies, were of opinion, that further petitions were nugatory: but, this worthy citizen, a friend to both countries, and devoted to a reconciliation on constitutional principles, urged the expediency and policy of trying, once more, the effect of an humble, decent, and firm petition, to the common head of the empire. The high opinion that was conceived of his patriotism and abilities, induced the members to assent to the measure, though they generally conceived it to be labour lost. The petition agreed upon, was the work of Mr. Dickinson's pen. In this, among other things, it was stated: "That, notwithstanding their sufferings, they had retained too high a regard for the kingdom, from which they derived their origin, to request such a reconciliation, as might, in any manner, be inconsistent with her dignity and welfare. Attached to his majesty's person, family, and government, with all the devotion that principle and affection can inspire; connected with Great Britain by the strongest ties, that can unite society; and deploring every event that tended, in any degree, to weaken them, they not only most fervently desired the former harmony, between her and the colonies, to be restored, but that a concord might be established between them, upon so firm a basis, as to perpetuate its blessings, uninterrupted by any future dissensions, to succeeding generations, in both countries. They, therefore, beseeched, that his majesty would be pleased to direct some mode, by which the united applications of his faithful colonists to the throne, in pursuance of their common councils, might be improved into a happy and perma-



ment reconciliation." By this last clause, congress meant, that the mother country should propose a plan, for establishing by compact, something like Magna Charta, for the colonies. They did not aim at a total exemption from the controul of parliament; nor were they unwilling to contribute in their own way, to the expenses of government: but, they feared the horrors of war less than submission to unlimited parliamentary supremacy. They desired an amicable compact, in which doubtful, undefined points, should be ascertained, so as to secure that proportion of authority and liberty, which would be for the general good of the whole empire. They fancied themselves in the condition of the barons at Runnymede; with this difference, that, in addition to opposing the king, they had also to oppose the parliament. This difference was more nominal than real; for, in the latter case, the king and parliament stood precisely in the same relation to the people of America, which subsisted in the former, between the king and people of England. In both, popular leaders were contending with the sovereign, for the privileges of subjects. This well-meant petition was presented on September 1st, 1775, by Mr. Penn, and Mr. Lee; and, on the 4th, lord Dartmouth informed them, "that to it, no answer would be given." This slight contributed, not a little, to the union and perseverance of the colonists. When pressed by the calamities of war, a doubt would sometimes arise, in the minds of scrupulous persons, that they had been too hasty, in their opposition to the protecting, parent state. To such, it was usual to present the second petition of congress to the king; observing thereon, that all the blood, and all the guilt of the war, must be charged on British, and not on American counsels. Though the colonists were accused, in a speech from the throne, as meaning only "to amuse, by vague expressions of attachment to the parent state, and the strongest protestations of loyalty to their king, while they were preparing for a general revolt; and that their rebellious war was manifestly carried on, for the purpose of establishing an independent empire:" yet, at that time, and for months after, a redress of grievances was their ultimate aim.

Conscious of this intention, and assenting, in the sincerity of their souls, to the submissive language of their petition, they illy brooked the contempt, with which their joint supplication was treated ; and, still worse, that they should be charged from the throne, with studied duplicity.

Nothing contributes more to the success of revolutions, than moderation. Intemperate zealots overshoot their object, and soon spend their force ; while the calm and dispassionate persevere to the end. The bulk of the people, in civil commotions, are influenced to a choice of sides, by the general complexion of the measures adopted by the respective parties. When these appear to be dictated by justice and prudence, and to be uninfluenced by passion, ambition or avarice, they are disposed to favour them. Such was the effect of this second petition, through a long and trying war, in which, men of serious reflection were often called upon to examine the rectitude of their conduct.

Though the refusal of an answer, to this renewed application of congress to the king, was censured by numbers in Great Britain, as well as in the colonies ; yet, the partisans of ministry varnished the measure, as proper and expedient. They contended, that the petition, as it contained no offers of submission, was unavailing, as a ground work of negotiation. Nothing was further from the thoughts of congress, than such concessions, as were expected in Great Britain. They conceived themselves to be more sinned against than sinning. They claimed a redress of grievances, as a matter of right : but were persuaded, that concessions, for this purpose, were acts of justice, and not of humiliation ; and, therefore, could not be disgraceful to those by whom they were made. To prevent future altercations, they wished for an amicable compact, to ascertain the extent of parliamentary supremacy. The mother country wished for absolute submission to her authority ; the colonists, for a repeal of every act, that imposed taxes, or that interfered in their internal legislation. The ministry of England, being determined not to repeal these acts, and the congress equally determined not to submit to them ; the claims of the two

countries were so wide from each other, as to afford no reasonable ground to expect a compromise. It was, therefore, concluded, that any notice taken of the petition would only afford an opportunity for the colonies to prepare themselves for the last extremity.

A military opposition to the armies of Great Britain, being resolved upon by the colonies, it became an object of consequence to fix on a proper person, to conduct that opposition. Many of the colonists had titles of high rank in the militia, and several had seen something of real service, in the late war between France and England: but there was no individual of such superior military experience, as to entitle him to a decided pre-eminence; or even to qualify him, on that ground, to contend, on equal terms, with the British masters of the art of war. In elevating one man, by the free voice of an invaded country, to the command of thousands of his equal fellow citizens, no consideration was regarded but the interest of the community. To bind the uninvaded provinces more closely to the common cause, policy directed the views of congress to the south.

Among the southern colonies, Virginia, for numbers, wealth, and influence, stood pre-eminent. To attach so respectable a colony to the aid of Massachusetts, by selecting from it a commander in chief, was not less warranted by the great military genius of one of its distinguished citizens, than dictated by sound policy. George Washington was, by an unanimous vote, appointed commander in chief of all the forces raised, or to be raised, for the defence of the colonies. It was a fortunate circumstance attending his election, that it was accompanied with no competition, and followed by no envy. That same general impulse on the public mind, which led the colonists to agree in many other particulars, pointed to him, as the most proper person for presiding over the military arrangements of America. Not only congress, but the inhabitants, in the east and the west, in the north and the south, as well before as at the time of embodying a continental army, were in a great degree unanimous in his favour.

General Washington was born on the 22d of February,

1732. His education favoured the production of a solid mind, and a vigorous body. Mountain air, abundant exercise in the open country, the wholesome toils of the chace, and the delightful scenes of rural life, expanded his limbs to an unusual, graceful, and well proportioned size. His youth was spent in the acquisition of useful knowledge, and in pursuits, tending to the improvement of his fortune, or the benefit of his country. Fitted more for active, than for speculative life, he devoted the greater proportion of his time to the latter: but this was amply compensated by his being frequently in such situations, as called forth the powers of his mind, and strengthened them by repeated exercise. Early in life, in obedience to his country's call, he entered the military line, and began his career of fame, in opposing that power, in concert with whose troops, he acquired his last and most distinguished honours. He was aid-de-camp to general Braddock in 1755; when that unfortunate officer was killed. He was eminently serviceable in covering the retreat, and saving the remains of the routed army. For three years after the defeat of Braddock, George Washington was commander in chief of the forces of Virginia, against the incursions of the French and Indians, from the Ohio. He continued in service till the reduction of Fort Duquesne, in 1758, gave peace to the frontiers of his native colony, Virginia. Soon after that event, he retired to his estate, Mount Vernon, on the banks of the Potomac, and with great industry and success, pursued the arts of peaceful life. When the proceedings of the British parliament alarmed the colonists with apprehensions, that a blow was levelled at their liberties, he again came forward into public view, and was appointed a delegate to the congress, which met in September, 1774. Possessed of a large proportion of common sense, and directed by a sound judgment, he was better fitted for the exalted station to which he was called, than many others who, to a greater brilliancy of parts, frequently add the excentricity of original genius. Engaged in the busy scenes of life, he knew human nature, and the most proper method of accomplishing proposed objects. His passions were subdued and kept in subjection to reason. His soul, superior to party spirit,



to prejudice, and illiberal views, moved according to the impulses it received from an honest heart, a good understanding, common sense, and a sound judgment. He was habituated to view things on every side, to consider them in all relations, and to trace the possible and probable consequences of proposed measures. Much addicted to close thinking, his mind was constantly employed. By frequent exercise, his understanding and judgment expanded, so as to be able to discern truth, and to know what was proper to be done, in the most difficult conjunctures.

Soon after, general Washington was appointed commander in chief, four major generals, one adjutant general, with the rank of a brigadier, and eight brigadier generals, were appointed, in subordination to him ; who were as follow :

1st Major General,	Artemas Ward.
2d,	Charles Lee.
3d,	Philip Schuyler.
4th,	Israel Putnam.
Adjutant General,	Horatio Gates.
1st Brig. General,	Seth Pomeroy.
2d,	Richard Montgomery.
3d,	David Wooster.
4th,	William Heath.
5th,	Joseph Spencer.
6th,	John Thomas.
7th,	John Sullivan.
8th,	Nathaniel Greene.

General Washington replied, to the president of congress, announcing his appointment, in the following words :

Mr. President,

“ Though I am truly sensible of the high honour done me, in this appointment, yet, I feel great distress, from a consciousness, that my abilities and military experience, may not be equal to the extensive and important trust. However, as the congress desire it, I will enter upon the momentous duty, and exert every power I possess in their service, and for the support of the glorious cause. I beg they will accept

my most cordial thanks, for this distinguished testimony of their approbation.

“But, lest some unlucky event should happen, unfavourable to my reputation, I beg it may be remembered by every gentleman in the room, that I this day declare with the utmost sincerity, I do not think myself equal to the command I am honoured with.

“As to pay, sir, I beg leave to assure the congress, that as no pecuniary consideration could have tempted me to accept this arduous employment, at the expense of my domestic ease and happiness, I do not wish to make any profit from it. I will keep an exact account of my expenses. Those I doubt not, they will discharge, and that is all I desire.”

A special commission was drawn up, and presented to him, and at the same time, an unanimous resolution was adopted by congress: “that they would maintain and assist him, and adhere to him, with their lives and fortunes, in the cause of American liberty.” Instructions were also given him for his government, by which, after reciting various particulars, he was directed: “to destroy or make prisoners, of all persons who now are, or who hereafter shall appear in arms against the good people of the colonies.” The whole was summed up in authorising him, “to order and dispose of the army under his command, as might be most advantageous for obtaining the end, for which it had been raised; making it his special care, in discharge of the great trust committed to him, that the liberties of America received no detriment.” About the same time, twelve companies of riflemen were ordered to be raised in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. The men, to the amount of 1430, were procured, and forwarded with great expedition. They had to march from 4 to 700 miles; and yet, the whole business was completed, and they joined the American army at Cambridge, in less than two months, from the day on which the first resolution for raising them was agreed to.

Coeval with the resolution for raising an army, was another for emitting a sum, not exceeding two millions of dollars, in bills of credit, for the defence of America; and the

colonies were pledged for their redemption. This sum was increased from time to time by further emissions. The colonies, having neither money nor revenue at their command, were forced to adopt this expedient; the only one which was in their power for supporting an army. No one delegate opposed the measure. So great had been the credit of the former emissions of paper, in the greater part of the colonies, that very few at that time foresaw or apprehended the consequences of unfunded paper emissions: but had all the consequences which resulted from this measure, in the course of the war, been foreseen, it must, notwithstanding, have been adopted: for it was a less evil, that there should be a general wreck of property, than that the essential rights and liberties of a growing country should be lost. A happy ignorance of future events, combined with the ardour of the times, prevented many reflections on this subject, and gave credit and circulation to these bills of credit.

General Washington, soon after his appointment to the command of the American army, set out for the camp, at Cambridge. On his way thither, he was treated with the highest honours, in every place through which he passed. Large detachments of volunteers, composed of private gentlemen, turned out to escort him.

On his arrival at Cambridge, July 3d, 1775, he was received with the joyful acclamations of the American army. At the head of his troops, he published a declaration, previously drawn up by congress, in the nature of a manifesto, setting forth the reasons for taking up arms. In this, after enumerating various grievances of the colonies, and vindicating them from a premeditated design, of establishing independent states, it was added: "In our own native land, in defence of the freedom which is our birthright, and which we ever enjoyed till the late violation of it; for the protection of our property, acquired solely by the industry of our forefathers, and ourselves, against violence actually offered, we have taken up arms; we shall lay them down when hostilities shall cease on the part of the aggressors, and all danger of their being renewed, shall be removed, and not before."

When general Washington joined the American army, he found the British intrenched on Bunker's-hill, having also three floating batteries in Mystic river, and a twenty gun ship below the ferry, between Boston and Charlestown. They had also a battery on Copse's hill, and were strongly fortified on the neck. The Americans were intrenched at Winter-hill, Prospect-hill, and Roxbury, communicating with one another by small posts, over a distance of ten miles. There were also parties stationed in several towns, along the sea coast. They had neither engineers to plan suitable works, nor sufficient tools for their erection.

In the American camp, was collected a large body of men : but without those conveniences, which ancient establishments have introduced for the comfort of regular armies. Instead of tents, sails, now rendered useless by the obstructions of commerce, were applied for their covering : but, even of them, there was not a sufficiency. The American soldiers, having joined the camp, in all that variety of clothing, which they used in their daily labour, were without uniformity of dress. To abolish provincial distinctions, the hunting shirt was introduced. They were also without those heads of departments, in the line of commissaries, or quarter masters, which are necessary for the regular and economical supply of armies. Individuals, brought to camp their own provisions, on their own horses. In some parts, committees of supplies were appointed, who purchased necessaries at public expense, sent them on to camp, and distributed them to such as were in want, without any regularity or system. The country afforded provisions ; and nothing more was wanting, than proper systems for their collection, and distribution. Other articles, though equally necessary, were almost wholly deficient ; and could not be procured, but with difficulty. On the 4th of August, the whole stock of powder in the American camp, and in the public magazines, of the four New England provinces, would make little more than nine rounds a man. The continental army remained in this destitute condition, for a fortnight or more. This was generally known among themselves, and was also communicated to the British, by a deserter : but



they, suspecting a plot, would not believe it. A supply of a few tons was sent on to them from the committee of Elizabethtown: but this was done privately, lest the adjacent inhabitants, who were equally destitute, should stop it for their own use. The public rulers in Massachusetts issued a recommendation to the inhabitants, not to fire a gun at beast, bird or mark; in order that they might husband their little stock, for the more necessary purpose of shooting men. A supply of several thousand pounds weight of powder, was soon after obtained from Africa, in exchange for New England rum. This was managed with so much address, that every ounce for sale in the British forts on the African coasts, was purchased up, and brought off for the use of the Americans.

Embarrassments, from various quarters, occurred in the formation of a continental army. The appointment of general officers, made by congress, was not satisfactory. Enterprising leaders had come forward, with their followers, on the commencement of hostilities, without scrupulous attention to rank. When these were all blended together, it was impossible to assign to every officer the station which his services merited, or his vanity demanded. Materials for a good army were collected. The husbandmen who flew to arms, were active, zealous, and of unquestionable courage: but to introduce discipline and subordination, among free men who were habituated to think for themselves, was an arduous labour.

The want of system, and of union under proper heads, pervaded every department. From the circumstance, that the persons employed in providing necessaries for the army were unconnected with each other, much waste and unnecessary delays were occasioned. The troops of the different colonies came into service, under variant establishments. Some were enlisted with the express condition of choosing their officers. The rations promised by the local legislatures, varied both as to quantity, quality and price. To form one uniform mass of these discordant materials, and to subject the licentiousness of independent freemen to the controul of military discipline, was a delicate and difficult business.

The continental army, put under the command of general Washington, amounted to 14,500 men. These had been so judiciously stationed round Boston, as to confine the British to the town, and to exclude them from the forage and provisions, which the adjacent country and islands in Boston-bay afforded. This force was thrown into three grand divisions. General Ward commanded the right wing, at Roxbury. General Lee, the left, at Prospect-hill; and the centre was commanded by General Washington. In arranging the army, the military skill of adjutant-general Gates, was of great service. Method and punctuality were introduced. The officers and privates were taught to know their respective places, and to have the mechanism and movements, as well as the name of an army.

When some effectual pains had been taken to discipline the army, it was found that the term, for which enlistments had taken place, was on the point of expiring. The troops from Connecticut and Rhode-Island, were engaged only, till the 1st day of December, 1775; and no part of the army longer than the 1st day of January, 1776. Such mistaken apprehensions respecting the future conduct of Great Britain prevailed, that many thought the assumption of a determined spirit of resistance, would lead to a redress of all their grievances.

The Massachusetts assembly and continental congress, both resolved in November, to fit out armed vessels, to cruise on the American coast, for the purpose of intercepting war-like stores and supplies, designed for the use of the British army. The object was at first limited: but as the prospect of accommodation vanished, it was extended to all British property afloat, on the high seas. The Americans were dissident of their ability to do any thing on water, in opposition to the greatest naval power in the world: but from a combination of circumstances, their first attempts were successful.

The Lee privateer, captain Manly, took the brig Nancy, an ordnance ship, from Woolwich, containing a large brass mortar, several pieces of brass cannon, a large quantity of arms and ammunition; with all manner of tools, utensils, and machines, necessary for camps, and artillery. Had con-

gress sent an order for supplies, they could not have made out a list of articles, more suitable to their situation, than those, thus providentially thrown into their hands.

In about nine days after, three ships, with various stores, for the British army, and a brig from Antigua, with rum, were taken by captain Manly. Before five days more had elapsed, several other store ships were captured. By these means, the distresses of the British troops, in Boston, were increased, and supplies, for the continental army, were procured. Naval captures, being unexpected, were matter of triumph to the Americans, and of surprise to the British. The latter scarcely believed, that the former would oppose them by land, with a regular army: but never suspected, that a people, so unfurnished as they were, with many things necessary for arming vessels, would presume to attempt any thing on water. A spirit of enterprise, invigorated by patriotic zeal, prompted the hardy New England-men to undertake the hazardous business; and their success encouraged them to proceed. Before the close of the year, congress determined to build five vessels of 32 guns; five of 28, and three of 24. About this time, an event took place, which would have disposed a less determined people, to desist from provoking the vengeance of the British navy. This was the burning of Falmouth, in the northern part of Massachusetts. Captain Moet, in the *Canceaux*, of sixteen guns, on the 18th of October, 1775, destroyed 139 houses, and 278 stores, and other buildings in that town.\*

\* Captain Moet had been frequently at Falmouth, and was there hospitably entertained. After hostilities had commenced, but before serious war was contemplated, he landed as formerly: but not as an enemy. Brigadier Thompson, under no orders of government, took him prisoner. The inhabitants interposed; and, from motives of justice and policy, urged and accomplished his unconditional discharge. The affront rankled in the heart of the captain. He soon after returned, with a small naval force, and gave notice, that he was under orders to reduce the town to ashes, and that he should begin the business at sun rise, the next morning. No resistance was made. The inhabitants employed themselves, during the night, in removing their effects. The next morning, the town was in flames. Moet's armed naval force lay all day before it, and, without cessation, threw shells,

This spread an alarm on the coast: but produced no disposition to submit. Many moved from the sea ports, with their families and effects: but no solicitations were preferred to obtain British protection.

In a few days after the burning of Falmouth, the old south meeting house, in Boston, was taken into possession by the British; and destined for a riding school, and the service of the light dragoons. These proceedings produced, in the minds of the colonists, a more determined spirit of resistance, and a more general aversion to Great Britain.

carcasses, and hot shot into it, till its destruction was completed. This being done, captain Moet, with his fleet, drew off. Thus the pride of the province of Maine was laid desolate, in one day; and 139 families, who, 24 hours before, lived in ease and comfort, were reduced to want, and had no shelter from the autumnal storms, and approaching winter. Falmouth had formerly been twice sacked by Indians, and some of its inhabitants had been killed by them: but, no act of theirs, was to be compared with this conflagration. The Indians scalped women and children, to obtain a bounty. They robbed houses, for the sake of plunder: but, captain Moet, without the hope of gain, and without provocation, destroyed the subsistence, and blasted the hopes of a whole community. A new town, like the Phœnix, has arisen from the ashes of the old; and is now in flourishing circumstances. See Sullivan's History of the District of Maine, pages 205, 208.



## CHAPTER IX.

*Ticonderoga taken; Canada invaded, and evacuated.*

IT early occurred to many, that if the sword decided the controversy between Great Britain and her colonies, the possession of Ticonderoga would be essential to the security of the latter. Situated on a promontory, formed at the junction of the waters of lake George and lake Champlain; it is the key of all communication between New York and Canada. Messrs. Deane, Wooster, Parsons, Stephens and others, of Connecticut, planned a scheme to obtain possession of this valuable post. Having procured a loan of 1800 dollars of public money, and provided a sufficient quantity of powder and ball, they set off for Bennington, to obtain the co-operation of colonel Allen, of that place. Two hundred and seventy men, mostly of that brave and hardy people, who are called green mountain boys, were speedily collected at Castleton; which was fixed on as the place of rendezvous. At this place, colonel Arnold, who, though attended only with a servant, was prosecuting the same object, unexpectedly joined them. He had been early chosen a captain of a volunteer company, by the inhabitants of Newhaven, among whom he resided. As soon as he received news of the Lexington battle, he marched off with his company for the vicinity of Boston, and arrived there, though 150 miles distant, in a few days. Immediately after his arrival, he waited on the Massachusetts committee of safety, and informed them, that there were, at Ticonderoga, many pieces of cannon, and a great quantity of valuable stores; and that the fort was in a ruinous condition, and garrisoned only by about forty men. They appointed him a colonel, and commissioned him to raise 400 men, and to take Ticonderoga. The leaders of the party, which had previously rendezvoused at Castleton, admitted colonel Arnold to join them. It was agreed that colonel Allen should be the commander in chief of the expedition, and that

colonel Arnold should be his assistant. They proceeded without delay, and arrived, in the night, at lake Champlain, opposite to Ticonderoga. Allen and Arnold crossed over with 83 men, and landed near the garrison. They contended who should go in first: but it was at last agreed, that they should both go in together. They advanced abreast, and entered the fort at the dawning of day. A sentry snapped his piece at one of them, and then retreated, through the covered way, to the parade. The Americans followed, and immediately drew up. The commander, surprised in his bed, was called upon to surrender the fort. He asked, by what authority? Colonel Allen replied: "I demand it in the name of the Great Jehovah, and of the continental congress." No resistance was made; and the fort, with 100 pieces of cannon, other valuable stores, and 48 prisoners, fell into the hands of the Americans. The boats had been sent back, for the remainder of the men: but the business was done before they got over. Colonel Seth Warner was sent off with a party, to take possession of Crown-Point, where a serjeant and twelve men performed garrison duty. This was speedily effected. The next object, calling for the attention of the Americans, was to obtain the command of lake Champlain: but, to accomplish this, it was necessary for them to get possession of a sloop of war, lying at St. John's, at the northern extremity of the lake. With the view of capturing this sloop, it was agreed to man and arm a schooner, lying at South Bay; that Arnold should command her, and that Allen should command some batteaux on the same expedition. A favourable wind carried the schooner ahead of the batteaux, and colonel Arnold got immediate possession of the sloop, by surprise. The wind again favouring him, he returned, with his prize, to Ticonderoga, and rejoined colonel Allen. The latter soon went home; and the former, with a number of men, agreed to remain there in garrison. In this rapid manner, the possession of Ticonderoga, and the command of lake Champlain, was obtained, without any loss, by a few determined men. Intelligence of these events was, in a few days, communicated to congress, which met, for the first time, at

ten o'clock of the same day, in the morning of which, Ticonderoga was taken. They rejoiced in the spirit of enterprise, displayed by their countrymen: but feared the charge of being aggressors, or of doing any thing to widen the breach between Great Britain and the colonies; for an accommodation was, at that time, their unanimous wish. They therefore recommended to the committees of the cities and counties of New York and Albany, to cause the cannon and stores to be removed from Ticonderoga to the south end of lake George, and to take an exact inventory of them: "in order that they might be safely returned, when the restoration of the former harmony between Great Britain and the colonies, so ardently wished for by the latter, should render it prudent, and consistent with the overruling law of self-preservation."

Colonel Arnold, having begun his military career with a series of successes, was urged by his native impetuosity to project more extensive operations. He, on the 13th of June, wrote a letter to congress, strongly urging an expedition into Canada, and offering with 2000 men to reduce the whole province. In his ardent zeal to oppose Great Britain, he had advised the adoption of offensive war, even before congress had organized an army, or appointed a single military officer. His importunity was at last successful, as shall hereafter be related: but not till two months had elapsed, subsequent to his first proposition of conducting an expedition against Canada. Such was the increasing fervour of the public mind in 1775, that what, in the early part of the year, was deemed violent and dangerous, was in its progress pronounced both moderate and expedient.

Sir Guy Carleton, the king's governor in Canada, no sooner heard that the Americans had surprised Ticonderoga, and Crown-Point, and obtained the command of lake Champlain, than he planned a scheme for their recovery. Having only a few regular troops under his command, he endeavoured to induce the Canadians and Indians, to co-operate with him; but they both declined. He established martial law, that he might compel the inhabitants to take arms. They de-

clared themselves ready to defend the province: but refused to march out of it, or to commence hostilities on their neighbours. Colonel Johnston had, on the same occasion, repeated conferences with the Indians, and endeavoured to influence them to take up the hatchet; but they steadily refused. In order to gain their co-operation, he invited them to feast on a Bostonian, and to drink his blood. This, in the Indian style, meant no more than to partake of a roasted ox and a pipe of wine, at a public entertainment; which was given to induce their co-operation with the British troops. The colonial patriots affected to understand it in its literal sense. It furnished, in their mode of explication, a convenient handle for operating on the passions of the people.

These exertions in Canada, which were principally made with a view to recover Ticonderoga, Crown-Point, and the command of lake Champlain, induced congress to believe that a formadable invasion of their northwestern frontier was intended, from that quarter. The evident tendency of the Quebec act favoured this opinion. Believing it to be the fixed purpose of the British ministry, to attack the united colonies on that side, they conceived that they would be inexcusable if they neglected the proper means for warding off so terrible a blow. They were also sensible that the only practicable plan to effect this purpose, was to make a vigorous attack upon Canada, while it was unable to resist the unexpected impression. Their success at Ticonderoga and Crown-Point, had already paved the way for this bold enterprise, and had broken down the fences which guarded the entrance into that province. On the other hand, they were sensible that by taking this step, they changed at once the whole nature of the war. From defensive it became offensive; and subjected them to the imputation of being the aggressors. They were well aware that several who had espoused their cause in Britain, would probably be offended at this measure; and charge them with heightening the mischiefs occasioned by the dispute. They knew that the principles of resistance, as far as they had hitherto acted upon them, were abetted by a considerable party even in Great Britain; and that to for-



feit their good opinion, might be of great disservice. Considerations of this kind made them weigh well the important step, before they ventured upon it. They, on the other hand, reflected that the eloquence of the minority in parliament, and the petitions and remonstrances of the merchants in Great Britain, had produced no solid advantages in their favour; and that they had no chance of relief, but from the smiles of heaven on their own endeavours. The danger was pressing. War was not only inevitable, but already begun. To wait till they were attacked by a formidable force at their backs, in the very instant when their utmost exertions would be requisite, perhaps insufficient, to protect their cities and sea coast, against an invasion from Britain, would be the summit of folly. The laws of war and of nations justified the forestalling of an enemy. The colonists maintained that to prevent known hostile intentions, was a matter of self-defence. They were also sensible they had already gone such lengths, as could only be vindicated by arms; and that, if a certain degree of success did not attend their resistance, they would be at the mercy of an irritated government, and their moderation in the single instance of Canada, would be an unavailing plea for indulgence. They were also encouraged to proceed, by certain information, that the French inhabitants of Canada, except the noblesse and the clergy, were as much discontented with their present system of government as the British settlers. It seemed therefore probable, that they would consider the provincials, rather as friends, than as enemies. The invasion of that province was therefore determined upon, if found practicable, and not disagreeable to the Canadians.

Congress had committed the management of their military arrangements, in this northern department, to generals Schuyler and Montgomery. While the former remained at Albany, to attend an Indian treaty, the latter was sent forward to Ticonderoga, with a body of troops from New York and New England. About this time, general Schuyler addressed the inhabitants, informing them, “that the only views of congress were to restore to them those rights, which every

subject of the British empire, of whatever religious sentiments he may be, is entitled to; and that, in the execution of these trusts, he had received the most positive orders to cherish every Canadian, and every friend to the cause of liberty, and sacredly to guard their property." The Americans, about 1000 in number, effected a landing at St. John's; which, being the first British post in Canada, lies only 115 miles to the northward of Ticonderoga. The British picquets were driven into the fort. The environs were then reconnoitred, and the fortifications were found to be much stronger than had been suspected. This induced the calling of a council of war, which recommended a retreat to Isle aux Noix, twelve miles south of St John's, to throw a boom across the channel, and to erect works for its defence. Soon after this event, a bad state of health induced general Schuyler to retire to Ticonderoga; and the command devolved on general Montgomery.

This enterprising officer, in a few days, returned to the vicinity of St. John's, and opened a battery against it. Ammunition was so scarce, that the siege could not be carried on, with any prospect of speedy success. The general detached a small body of troops, to attempt the reduction of fort Chamblee, only six miles distant. Success attended this enterprise. By its surrender, six tons of gunpowder were obtained, which enabled the general to prosecute the siege of St. John's with vigour. The garrison, though straitened for provisions, persevered in defending themselves with unabating fortitude. While general Montgomery was prosecuting this siege, the governor of the province collected, at Montreal, about 800 men, chiefly militia and Indians. He endeavoured to cross the river St. Lawrence, with this force, and to land at Longueuil, intending to proceed thence to attack the besiegers: but colonel Warner, with 300 green mountain boys, and a four pounder, prevented the execution of the design. The governor's party was suffered to come near the shore: but was then fired upon, with such effect as to make them retire, after sustaining great loss.

An account of this affair being communicated to the garri-

son in St. John's, major Preston, the commanding officer, surrendered, on receiving honourable terms of capitulation. About 500 regulars and 100 Canadians became prisoners to the provincials. They also acquired 39 pieces of cannon, seven mortars, and two howitzers, and about 800 stand of arms. Among the cannon were many brass field pieces; an article of which the Americans were nearly destitute.

While the siege of St. John's was pending, colonel Allen, who was returning with about 80 men, from a tour on which he had been sent by his general, was captured by the British near Montreal. Though he had surrendered in action, with arms in his hands, under a verbal capitulation that he should receive good treatment, he was loaded with irons and in that condition sent to England.\*

\* Colonel Allen, after his exchange, published an interesting narrative of his captivity. The crime alleged against him was his taking Ticonderoga; and it was intended that he should be tried for this, as an act of rebellion. From his narrative, it appears that the irons placed on him were uncommonly heavy, and so fastened, that he could not lie down otherwise than on his back. A chest was his seat by day, and his bed by night. In letters to the British general Prescott, he urged his claim to better treatment, on the ground of his humanity and politeness, to all the prisoners he had taken: but no answer ever came to his hands. After he had been sent in irons as a state prisoner to England, he was sent back as a prisoner of war to America. On his return, when the fleet, on board of which he was confined, rendezvoused at the Cove of Cork, he received from the kindness of the inhabitants of that city, a plentiful supply of all his wants: but, their benevolence was intercepted by captain Symonds, of the British navy, who swore that "the damned American rebels, should not be so feasted by the damned rebels of Ireland." After much bad usage in a circuitous voyage, he was landed at Halifax, sick with the scurvy, and there put in prison. Thence he was sent to New York, and for a few months was admitted to his parole: but in August, 1777, on pretence of breaking it, was confined in the provost gaol. During his residence there, he was witness of the most horrid scenes of oppression and cruelty, to the American prisoners; and declares, that, from his own knowledge, he had no doubt that upwards of 2000 of them perished with hunger, cold, and sickness, occasioned by the filth of the places in which they were confined, and the scanty unwholesome provisions, with which they were served. He further states, that till the defeat of the Hessians at Trenton, in December, 1776, the conquest of the country was considered as certain; that the forfeiture of estates, and the execution of the leaders of the rebellion, were spoken of, as events near at

After the reduction of St. John's, general Montgomery proceeded towards Montreal. The few British forces there, unable to stand their ground, repaired for safety on board the shipping in hopes of escaping down the river; but they were prevented. General Prescott, who was on board with several officers, and about 120 privates, having no chance of escape, submitted to be prisoners on terms of capitulation. Eleven sail of vessels, with all their contents, consisting of ammunition, provisions, and intrenching tools, became the property of the provincials. Governor Carleton was about this time conveyed in a boat with muffled paddles, by a secret way to the Three Rivers, and thence to Quebec in a few days.

When Montreal was evacuated by the troops, the inhabitants applied to general Montgomery for a capitulation. He informed them, as they were defenceless, they could not expect such a concession: but, he engaged, upon his honour, to maintain the individuals and religious communities of the city, in the peaceable enjoyment of their property, and the free exercise of their religion. In all his transactions, he

hand; and that the severe treatment of the prisoners was founded on the idea, that every thing short of immediate execution, was better than they, as rebels, had a right to expect; that the most ungenerous cruel methods, by starvation and otherwise, were adopted to compel their enlistments into the British service; that many submitted to death, in preference to that mode of obtaining a release; that the halter and gallows were, in the early periods of the war, often presented to his own view, as the consequence of his obstinacy and rebellion: but afterwards, high command and a large tract of the conquered country was offered him, on condition he would join the British. To the last he replied: "that he viewed their offer, of conquered United States land, to be similar to that which the devil offered to Jesus Christ; to give him all the kingdoms of the world, if he would fall down and worship him, when at the same time, the poor devil had not one foot of land upon earth." A review of this narrative naturally excites speculations on the numerous executions, and extensive confiscations which, probably, would have been the consequence of the failure of the revolution, and ought to excite gratitude in the breast of every American, that these ruinous measures were prevented, by the final success of their arms. Colonel Allen was confined in the provost goal, of New York, till May, 1778, when he was exchanged; and to the great joy of his country, restored to activity in its service.



spoke, wrote, and acted with dignity and propriety; and treated the inhabitants with liberality and politeness.

Montreal, which at this time surrendered to the provincials, carried on an extensive trade, and contained many of those articles, which, from the operation of the resolutions of congress, could not be imported into any of the united colonies. From these stores, the American soldiers, who had hitherto suffered from the want of suitable clothing, obtained a plentiful supply.

General Montgomery, after leaving some troops in Montreal, and sending detachments into different parts of the province, advanced towards the capital. His little army arrived with expedition before Quebec. Success had hitherto crowned every attempt of general Montgomery: but his situation was nevertheless very embarrassing. Much to be pitied is the officer, who, having been bred to arms, in the strict discipline of regular armies, is afterwards called to command men, who carry with them the spirit of freedom into the field. The greater part of the Americans, officers as well as soldiers, having never seen any service, were ignorant of their duty, and feebly impressed with the military ideas of union, subordination and discipline. The army was continental in name and pay; but in no other respect. Not only the troops of different colonies conceived themselves independent of each other; but, in some instances, the different regiments of the same colony were backward to submit to the orders of officers in a higher grade of another line. They were soon tired of a military life. Novelty and the first impulse of passion had led them to camp: but, the approaching cold season, together with the fatigues and dangers incident to war, induced a general wish to relinquish the service. Though, by the terms of their enlistment, they were to be discharged in a few weeks, they could not brook an absence from their homes, for that short space of time. The ideas of liberty and independence, which roused the colonists to oppose the claims of Great Britain, operated against that implicit obedience, which is necessary to a well regulated army.

Even in European states, where long habits have established submission to superiors, as a primary duty of the common people, the difficulty of governing recruits, when first led to the field from civil occupations, is great: to exercise discipline over freemen, accustomed to act only from the impulse of their own minds, required not only a knowledge of human nature, but an accommodating spirit, and a degree of patience, which are rarely found among officers of regular armies. The troops under the immediate command of general Montgomery, were, from their usual habits, averse to the ideas of subordination, and had suddenly passed from domestic ease, to the numberless wants and distresses, which are incident to marches through strange and desert countries. Every difficulty was increased by the short term, for which they were enlisted. To secure the affections of the Canadians, it was necessary for the American general to restrain the appetites, and control the licentiousness of his soldiery; while the appearance of military harshness was dangerous, lest their good will might be forfeited. In this choice of difficulties, the genius of Montgomery surmounted many obstacles. During his short, but glorious career, he conducted with so much prudence, as to make it doubtful, whether we ought to admire most, the goodness of the man, or the address of the general.

About the same time that Canada was invaded, in the usual route from New York, a considerable detachment, from the American army, at Cambridge, was conducted into that royal province, by a new and unexpected passage. Colonel Arnold, who successfully conducted this bold undertaking, thereby acquired the name of the American Hannibal. He was detached, with a thousand men, from Cambridge, to penetrate into Canada, by ascending the river Kennebeck, and descending by the Chaudiere, to the river St. Lawrence. Great were the difficulties these troops had to encounter, in marching by an unexpected route, three hundred miles, through an uninhabited country. In ascending the Kennebeck, they were constantly obliged to work upwards, against an impetuous current. They were often compelled, by cata-

racts or other impediments, to land, and to haul their batteaux up rapid streams, and over falls of rivers. Nor was their march by land more eligible, than this passage by water. They had deep swamps, thick woods, difficult mountains, and craggy precipices, alternately to encounter. At some places, they had to cut their way, for miles together, through forests so embarrassed, that their progress was only four or five miles a day. The constant fatigue caused many to fall sick. One third of the number which set out was, from want of necessaries, obliged to return; the others proceeded with unabated fortitude and constancy. Provisions grew at length so scarce, that some of the men eat their dogs, cartouch boxes, breeches and shoes. When they were an hundred miles from any habitation, or prospect of a supply, their whole store was divided, which yielded four pints of flour to each man. After they had baked and eaten their last morsel, they had thirty miles to travel, before they could expect any further supply. The men bore up under these complicated distresses, with the greatest fortitude.\* They gloried in the hope of completing a march, which would rival the fame of similar expeditions undertaken by the heroes of antiquity. Having spent thirty-one days, in traversing a hideous wilderness, without ever seeing any thing human, they at length reached the inhabited parts of Canada. They were there well received, and supplied with every thing necessary for their comfort. The Canadians were struck with amazement, when they saw this armed force emerging from the wilderness. It had never entered their conceptions, that it was possible for human beings, to traverse such immense wilds. The most pointed instructions had been given to this corps, to conciliate the affections of the Canadians. It was particularly enjoined upon them, if the son of lord Chatham, then an officer in one of the British regiments in that province, should fall into their hands, to treat him with all possible attention, in return for the great

\* AARON BURR, afterwards vice-president of the United States, was one of this party. He was then about twenty years old, and had broken off from his legal studies, that he might serve on this expedition.

exertions of his father, in behalf of American liberty. A manifesto, subscribed by general Washington, which had been sent from Cambridge with this detachment, was circulated among the inhabitants of Canada. In this, they were invited to arrange themselves under the standard of general liberty; and were informed that the American army was sent, not to plunder but to protect them.

While general Montgomery lay at Montreal, colonel Arnold arrived at Point Levy, opposite to Quebec. Such was the consternation of the garrison and inhabitants, at his unexpected appearance, that had not the river intervened, an immediate attack, in the first surprise and confusion, might have been successful. The bold enterprise of one American army, marching through the wilderness, at a time when success was crowning every undertaking of another, invading in a different direction, struck terror into the breasts of those Canadians, who were unfriendly to the designs of congress. The embarrassments of the garrison were increased by the absence of sir Guy Carleton. That gallant officer, on hearing of Montgomery's invasion, prepared to oppose him in the extremes of the province. While he was collecting a force to attack invaders in one direction, a different corps, emerging out of the depths of an unexplored wilderness, suddenly appeared from another. In a few days colonel Arnold crossed the river St. Lawrence: but his chance of succeeding by a coup de main, was in that short space greatly diminished. The critical moment was past. The panic occasioned by his first appearance had abated, and solid preparations for the defence of the town were adopted. The inhabitants, both English and Canadians, as soon as danger pressed, united for their common defence. Alarmed for their property, they were, at their own request, embodied for its security. The sailors were taken from the shipping in the harbour, and put to the batteries on shore. As colonel Arnold had no artillery, after parading some days on the heights near Quebec, he drew off his troops, intending nothing more, until the arrival of Montgomery, than to cut off supplies from entering the garrison.



So favourable were the prospects of the united colonies at this period, that general Montgomery set on foot a regiment of Canadians, to be in the pay of congress. James Livingston, a native of New York, who had long resided in Canada, was appointed to the command thereof; and several recruits were engaged for the term of twelve months. The inhabitants on both sides of the river St. Lawrence, were very friendly. Expresses in the employ of the Americans, went without molestation, backwards and forwards, between Montreal and Quebec. Many individuals performed signal services, in favour of the invading army. Among a considerable number, Mr. Price stands conspicuous, who advanced 5000*l.* in specie, for their use.

Various causes had contributed to attach the inhabitants of Canada, especially those of the inferior classes, to the interest of congress, and to alienate their affections from the government of Great Britain. The contest was for liberty; and there is something in that sound, captivating to the mind of man, in a state of original simplicity. It was for the colonies; and Canada was also a colony. The objects of the war were therefore supposed to be for their common advantage. The form of government, lately imposed on them by act of parliament, was far from being so free, as the constitutions of the other colonies, and was in many respects particularly oppressive. The common people had no representative share in enacting the laws, by which they were to be governed; and were subjected to the arbitrary will of persons, over whom they had no control. Distinctions so degrading were not unobserved by the native Canadians: but were more obvious to those who had known the privileges enjoyed in the neighbouring provinces. Several individuals, educated in New England and New York, with the high ideas of liberty, inspired by their free constitutions, had, in the interval between the peace of Paris 1763, and the commencement of the American war, migrated into Canada. Such sensibly felt the difference between the governments they had left, and the arbitrary constitution imposed on them; and, both from principle and affection, earnestly

persuaded the Canadians to make a common cause with the united colonies.

Though motives of this kind induced the peasantry of the country to espouse the interest of congress, yet sundry individuals, and some whole orders of men, threw the weight of their influence into the opposite scale. The legal privileges which the Roman catholic clergy enjoyed, made them averse to a change, lest they should be endangered, by a more intimate connection with their protestant neighbours. They used their supposed influence in the next world, as an engine to operate on the movements of the present. They refused absolution to such of their flocks as abetted the Americans. This interdiction of the joys of heaven, by those who were supposed to hold the keys of it, operated powerfully on the opinions and practices of the superstitious multitude. The seigneurs had immunities unknown in the other colonies. Such is the fondness for power in every human breast, that revolutions are rarely favoured by any order of men, who have reason to apprehend that their future situation, in case of a change, will be less pre-eminent than before. The sagacious general Montgomery, no less a man of the world than an officer, discovered great address in accommodating himself to these clashing interests. Though he knew the part the popish clergy had acted, in opposition to him, yet he conducted towards them, as if totally ignorant of the matter; and treated them and their religion with great respect and attention. As far as he was authorised to promise, he engaged that their ecclesiastical property should be secured, and the free exercise of their religion continued. To all, he held forth the flattering idea of calling a convention of representatives, freely chosen, to institute, by its own will, such a form of government as they approved. While the great mind of this illustrious man, was meditating schemes of liberty and happiness, a military force was collecting and training to oppose him, which in a short time put a period to his valuable life.

At the time the Americans were before Montreal, general Carleton, as has been related, escaped through their hands,

and got safe to Quebec. His presence was itself a garrison. The confidence reposed in his talents inspired the men under his command, to make the most determined resistance. Soon after his arrival, he issued a proclamation, setting forth: "That all persons liable to do militia duty, and residing in Quebec, who refused to arm in conjunction with the royal army, should, in four days, quit Quebec, with their families, and withdraw from the limits of the district, by the first of December, on pain of being treated afterwards as spies or rebels." All who were unwilling to co-operate with the British army, being thus disposed of, the remaining inhabitants, though unused to arms, became, in a little time, so far acquainted with them, as to be very useful in defending the town. They supported fatigues, and submitted to command, with a patience and cheerfulness, that could not be exceeded by men familiarized to the hardships and subordination of a military life.

General Montgomery, having effected at Point aux Trembles a junction with colonel Arnold, commenced the siege of Quebec. Upon his arrival before the town, he wrote a letter to the British governor, recommending an immediate surrender, to prevent the dreadful consequences of a storm. Though the flag which conveyed this letter was fired upon, and all communication refused, general Montgomery found other means to convey a letter of the same tenor into the garrison: but the firmness of the governor could not be moved, either by threats or dangers. The Americans soon after commenced a bombardment with five small mortars; but with very little effect. In a few days general Montgomery opened a six gun battery, at the distance of seven hundred yards from the walls; but his metal was too light to make any impression.

The news of general Montgomery's success in Canada had filled the colonies with expectations, that the conquest of Quebec would soon add fresh lustre to his already brilliant fame. He knew well the consequences of popular disappointment, and was of opinion that unless something decisive was immediately done, the benefit of his previous acquisitions

would, in a great degree, be lost to the American cause. On both accounts, he was strongly impelled to make every exertion, for satisfying the expectations and promoting the interest of a people, who had honoured him with so great a share of their confidence. The government of Great Britain, in the extensive province of Canada, was at that time reduced to the single town of Quebec. The astonished world saw peaceable colonists suddenly transformed into soldiers, and these marching through unexplored wildernesses, and extending themselves by conquests, in the first moment after they had assumed the profession of arms. Towards the end of the year, the tide of fortune began to turn. Dissentions broke out between colonel Arnold and some of his officers, threatening the annihilation of discipline. The continental currency had no circulation in Canada, and all the hard money furnished for the expedition was nearly expended. Difficulties of every kind were daily increasing. The extremities of fatigue were constantly to be encountered. The American general had not a sufficient number of men to make the proper reliefs, in the daily labours they underwent; and that inconsiderable number, worn down with toil, was constantly exposed to the severities of a Canada winter. The period for which a great part of his men had enlisted, being on the point of expiration, he apprehended that they who were entitled to it, would insist on their discharge. On the other hand, he saw no prospect of staggering the resolution of the garrison. They were well supplied with every thing necessary for their defence, and were daily acquiring additional firmness. The extremity of winter was fast approaching. From these combined circumstances, general Montgomery was impressed with a conviction, that the siege should either be raised, or brought to a summary termination. To storm the place, was the only feasible method of effecting the latter purpose. But this was an undertaking, in which success was but barely possible. Great minds are seldom exact calculators of danger. Nor do they minutely attend to the difficulties which obstruct the attainment of their objects. Fortune, in contempt of the pride of man, has ever had an influence in the success or



failure of military enterprises. Some of the greatest achievements, of that kind, have owed their success to a noble contempt of common forms.

The upper part of Quebec was surrounded with very strong works, and the access from the lower town was excessively difficult, from its almost perpendicular steepness. General Montgomery, from a native intrepidity, and an ardent thirst for glory, overlooked all these dangers, and resolved at once, either to carry the place or perish in the attempt. Trusting much to his good fortune; confiding in the bravery of his troops, and their readiness to follow whithersoever he should lead; and depending somewhat on the extensiveness of the works, he determined to attempt the town by escalade.

The garrison of Quebec at this time consisted of about 1520 men, of which 800 were militia, and 450 were seamen belonging to the king's frigates, or merchant ships in the harbour. The rest were marines, regulars, or colonel Maclean's new raised emigrants. The American army consisted of about 800 men. Some had been left at Montreal, and near a third of Arnold's detachment, as has been related, had returned to Cambridge.

General Montgomery, having divided this little force into four detachments, ordered two feints to be made against the upper town; one by colonel Livingston, at the head of the Canadians, against St. John's gate; and the other by major Brown, against Cape Diamond: reserving to himself and colonel Arnold the two principal attacks, against the lower town. At five o'clock in the morning, general Montgomery advanced against the lower town. He passed the first barrier, and was just opening to attack the second, when he was killed, together with captain John M'Pherson, captain Cheesman, and some others. This so dispirited the men, that colonel Campbell, on whom the command devolved, thought proper to draw them off. In the mean time colonel Arnold, at the head of about 350 men, passed through St. Roques, and approached near a two gun battery, without being discovered. This he attacked, and, though it was well defended, carried it;

but with considerable loss. In this attack, colonel Arnold received a wound, which made it necessary to carry him off the field of battle. His party nevertheless continued the assault, and pushing on, made themselves masters of a second barrier. These brave men sustained the force of the whole garrison for three hours; but finding themselves hemmed in, and without hopes either of success, relief or retreat, they yielded to numbers, and the advantageous situation of their adversaries. The loss of the Americans, in killed and wounded, was about 100, and 300 were taken prisoners. Among the slain were captain Kendricks, lieutenant Humphries, and lieutenant Cooper. The behaviour of the provincial troops was such, as might have silenced those who had reproached them, for being deficient in courage. The most experienced veterans could not have exceeded the firmness they displayed in their last attack. The issue of this assault relieved the garrison of Quebec, from all apprehensions for its safety. The provincials were so much weakened, as to be scarcely equal to their own defence. However, colonel Arnold had the boldness to encamp within three miles of the town, and had the address, even with his reduced numbers, to impede the conveyance of refreshments and provisions into the garrison. His situation was extremely difficult. He was at an immense distance from those parts, whence effectual assistance could be expected. On his first entrance into the province, he had experienced much kind treatment from the inhabitants. The Canadians, besides being fickle in their resolutions, are apt to be biassed by success. Their disposition to aid the Americans, became daily more precarious. It was even difficult to keep the provincial troops from returning to their respective homes. Their sufferings were great. While their adversaries were comfortably housed in Quebec, they were exposed in the open air, to the extreme rigour of the season. The severity of a Canada winter was far beyond any thing with which they were acquainted. The snow lay above four feet deep on a level.

This deliverance of Quebec may be considered as a proof,

how much may be done by one man, for the preservation of a country. It also proves, that soldiers may in a short time be formed out of the mass of citizens.

The conflict being over, the ill will which had subsisted, during the siege, between the royal and provincial troops, gave way to sentiments of humanity. The Americans, who surrendered, were treated with kindness. Ample provisions were made for their wounded, and no unnecessary severity shown to any. Few men have ever fallen in battle, so much regretted by both sides as general Montgomery. His many amiable qualities had procured him an uncommon share of private affection, and his great abilities an equal proportion of public esteem. Being a sincere lover of liberty, he had engaged in the American cause from principle; and quitted the enjoyment of an easy fortune, and the highest domestic felicity, to take an active share in the fatigues and dangers of a war, instituted for the defence of the community, of which he was an adopted member. His well known character was almost equally esteemed by the friends and foes of the side which he had espoused. In America, he was celebrated as a martyr to the liberties of mankind; in Great Britain, as a misguided good man, sacrificing to what he supposed to be the rights of his country. His name was mentioned in parliament with singular respect. Some of the most powerful speakers in that illustrious assembly, displayed their eloquence in sounding his praise, and lamenting his fate. Those in particular, who had been his fellow soldiers in the late war, expatiated on his many virtues. The minister himself acknowledged his worth, while he reprobated the cause for which he fell. He concluded an involuntary panegyric, by saying: "Curse on his virtues, they have undone his country."

Though the invasion of Canada was finally unsuccessful, yet the advantages which the Americans gained in the months of September and October, gave fresh spirits to their army and people. The boldness of the enterprise might have taught Great Britain the folly of persisting in the design of

subjugating America. But instead of preserving the union, and restoring the peace of the empire, by repealing a few of her laws, she, from mistaken dignity, resolved on a more vigorous prosecution of the war.

The tide of good fortune, which, in the autumn of 1775, flowed in upon general Montgomery, induced congress to reinforce the army under his command. Chamblee, St. John's, and Montreal having surrendered, a fair prospect opened of expelling the British from Canada, and of annexing that province to the united colonies. While they were in imagination anticipating these events, the army in which they confided was defeated, and the general whom they so highly esteemed slain. The intelligence transmitted from general Montgomery, previous to his assault on Quebec, encouraged congress to resolve that nine battalions should be kept up and maintained in Canada. The repulse of their army, though discouraging, did not extinguish the ardour of the Americans. It was no sooner known at head quarters, in Cambridge, than general Washington convened a council of war, by which it was resolved: "That as no troops could be spared from Cambridge, the colonies of Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Hampshire should be requested to raise three regiments, and forward them to Canada. Congress also resolved to forward the reinforcements previously voted, and to raise four battalions in New York, for the defence of that colony, and to garrison Crown-Point, and the several posts to the southward of that fortress. That the army might be supplied with blankets for this winter expedition, a committee was appointed to procure from householders, such as could be spared from their families. To obtain a supply of hard money, for the use of the army in Canada, proper persons were employed to exchange paper money for specie. Such was the enthusiasm of the times, that many thousand Mexican dollars were frequently exchanged at par, by individuals, for the paper bills of congress. It was also resolved, to raise a corps of artillery for this service, and to take into the pay of the colonies, one thousand Canadians, in



addition to colonel Livingston's regiment. Moses Hazen, a native of Massachusetts, who had resided many years in Canada, was appointed to the command of this new corps.

Congress addressed a letter to the Canadians, in which they observed: "Such is the lot of human nature, that the best causes are subject to vicissitudes: but generous souls, enlightened and warmed with the fire of liberty, become more resolute as difficulties increase." They stated to them, "that eight battalions were raising to proceed to their province, and, that if more force were necessary, it should be sent." They requested them to seize, with eagerness, the favourable opportunity then offered, to co-operate in the present glorious enterprise; and advised them to establish associations in their different parishes; to elect deputies for forming a provincial assembly, and for representing them in congress.

The cause of the Americans had received such powerful aid from many patriotic publications in their gazettes, and from the fervent exhortations of popular preachers, connecting the cause of liberty with the animating principles of religion, that it was determined to employ these two powerful instruments of revolutions, printing and preaching, to operate on the minds of the Canadians. A complete apparatus for printing, together with a printer and a clergyman, were therefore sent into Canada.

Congress also appointed Dr. Franklin, Mr. Chase and Mr. Carrol, the two first of whom were members of their body, and the last a respectable gentleman of the Roman catholic persuasion, to proceed to Canada with the view of gaining over the people of that colony to the cause of America; and authorised them to promise, on behalf of the united colonies, that Canada should be received into their association on equal terms; and also that the inhabitants thereof should enjoy the free exercise of their religion, and the peaceable possession of all their ecclesiastical property.

The desire of effecting something decisive in Canada, before the approaching spring would permit relief to ascend the river St. Lawrence, added to the enthusiasm of the day, encountered

difficulties, which, in less animated times, would be reckoned insurmountable. Arthur St. Clair, who was appointed colonel of one of the Pennsylvania regiments, received his recruiting orders on the 10th of January; and, notwithstanding the shortness of the period, his regiment was not only raised, but six companies of it had, in this extremely cold season, completed their march from Pennsylvania to Canada, a distance of several hundred miles; and, on the eleventh of April following, joined the American army before Quebec.

Though congress and the states made great exertions to support the war in Canada, yet from the fall of Montgomery their interest in that colony daily declined. The reduction of Quebec was an object to which their resources were inadequate. Their unsuccessful assault on Quebec made an impression both on the Canadians and Indians unfavourable to their views. A woman, infected with the small-pox, had either been sent out, or voluntarily came out of Quebec, and, by mixing with the American soldiers, propagated that scourge of the new world, to the great diminution of the effective force of their army. The soldiers inoculated themselves, though their officers issued positive orders to the contrary. By the first of May, so many new troops had arrived, that the American army, in name, amounted to 3000: but, from the prevalence of the small-pox, there were only 900 fit for duty. The increasing number of invalids retarded military operations, while the opposite party was buoyed up, with the expectation that the advancing season would soon bring them relief. To these causes of the declining interest of congress, it must be added that the affections of the Canadians were alienated. They had many, and well founded complaints against the American soldiers. Unrestrained by the terror of civil law, and refusing obedience to a military code, the hope of impunity, and the love of plunder led many of the invading army to practices not less disgraceful to themselves, than injurious to the cause in which they had taken arms. Not only the common soldiers, but the officers of the American army deviated, in their intercourse with the Canadians, from the maxims of sound policy. Several of them, having been lately

taken from obscure life, were giddy with their exaltation. Far from home, they were unawed by those checks, which commonly restrain the ferocity of man.

The reduction of Chamblee, St. John's, and Montreal, together with the exposed situation of Quebec, being known in England, measures were without delay adopted by the British ministry, to introduce into Canada, as soon as possible, a force sufficient for the double purpose of recovering what they had lost, and of prosecuting offensive operations from that quarter against the revolted colonies. The van of this force made good its passage, very early in May, through the ice, up the river St. Lawrence. The expectation of their coming had for some time damped the hopes of the besiegers, and had induced them to think of a retreat. The day before the first of the British reinforcements arrived, that measure was resolved upon by a council of war, and arrangements were made for carrying it into execution.

Governor Carleton was too great a proficient in the art of war, to delay seizing the advantages which the consternation of the besiegers, and the arrival of a reinforcement, afforded. A small detachment of soldiers and marines from the ships, which had just ascended the river St. Lawrence, being landed and joined to the garrison in Quebec, he marched out at their head to attack the Americans. On his approach, he found every thing in confusion. The late besiegers, abandoning their artillery and military stores, had in great precipitation retreated. In this manner, at the expiration of five months, the mixed siege and blockade of Quebec was raised. The fortitude and perseverance of the garrison reflected honour on both officers and privates.

The reputation acquired by general Carleton in his military character, for bravely and judiciously defending the province committed to his care, was exceeded by the superior applause merited from his exercise of the virtues of humanity and generosity. Among the numerous sick in the American hospitals, several incapable of being moved were left behind. The victorious general proved himself worthy of success, by his treatment of these unfortunate men; he not

only fed and cloathed them, but permitted them when recovered to return home. Apprehending that fear might make some conceal themselves in the woods, rather than, by applying for relief, make themselves known, he removed their doubts by a proclamation, in which he engaged: "that as soon as their health was restored, they should have free liberty of returning to their respective provinces." This humane line of conduct was more injurious to the views of the leaders in the American councils, than the severity practised by other British commanders. The truly politic, as well as humane general Carleton dismissed these prisoners after liberally supplying their wants, with a recommendation, "to go home, mind their farms, and keep themselves and their neighbours from all participation in the unhappy war."

The small force which arrived at Quebec early in May, was followed by several British regiments, together with the Brunswick troops, in such a rapid succession, that in a few weeks the whole was estimated at 13,000 men.

The Americans retreated forty-five miles, before they stopped. After a short halt, they proceeded to the Sorel, at which place, they threw up some slight works for their safety. They were there joined by some battalions coming to reinforce them. About this time general Thomas, the commander in chief in Canada, was seized with the small pox and died; having forbidden his men to inoculate, he conformed to his own rule, and refused to avail himself of that precaution. On his death, the command devolved at first on general Arnold, and afterwards on general Sullivan. It soon became evident, that the Americans must abandon the whole province of Canada.

From a desire to do something which might counter-balance, in the minds of the Canadians, the unfavourable impression which this further retreat would communicate, general Thomson projected an attack on the British post at the Three Rivers. This lies about half way between Quebec and Montreal, and is so called from the vicinity of one of the branches of a large river, whose waters are discharged through three mouths into the St. Lawrence.



A plan of operations was agreed upon, in which it was determined to make the attack, in four different places, at the same time; and very early in the morning, in the hope of surprising the enemy. Much resolution was discovered in its execution: but, the concurrence of too many circumstances was necessary to ensure success. The expectation of simultaneous operations failed; the chance of a surprise was lost. The assailants were repulsed and driven some miles through a deep swamp. General Thomson and colonel Irvine, with 200 men, were taken prisoners, and about 25 were killed. The loss of the British was inconsiderable.

The British forces having arrived, and a considerable body of them having rendezvoused at the Three Rivers, a serious pursuit of the American army commenced. Had sir Guy Carleton taken no pains to cut off their retreat, and at once attacked their post, or rather their fortified camp at Sorel, it would probably have fallen into his hands: but either the bold, though unsuccessful attack at the Three Rivers had taught him to respect them, or he wished to reduce them without bloodshed. In the pursuit, he made three divisions of his army, and arranged them so as to embrace the whole American encampment, and to command it in every part. The retreat was delayed so long that the Americans evacuated Sorel, only about two hours before one division of the British made its appearance.

While the Americans were retreating, they were daily assailed by the remonstrances of the inhabitants of Canada, who had either joined or befriended them. Great numbers of Canadians had taken a decided part in their favour, rendered them essential services and thereby incurred the heavy penalties annexed to the crime of supporting rebellion. These, though congress had assured them but a few months before, "that they would never abandon them to the fury of their common enemies," were, from the necessity of the case, left exposed to the resentment of their provincial rulers. Several of them, with tears in their eyes, expostulated with the retreating army, and, bewailing their hard fate, prayed for support. The only relief the Americans could offer, was an

assurance of continued protection, if they retreated with them : but this was a hard alternative, to men who had wives, children, and immoveable effects. They generally concluded, that it was the least of two evils, to cast themselves on the mercy of that government, against which they had offended.

The distresses of the retreating army were great. The British were close on their rear and threatening them with destruction. The unfurnished state of the colonies in point of ordnance, imposed a necessity of preserving their cannon. The men were obliged to drag their loaded batteaux up the rapids by mere strength, and when they were to the waist in water. The retreating army was also incumbered with great numbers labouring under the small pox, and other diseases. Two regiments, at one time, had not a single man in health. Another had only six, and a fourth only forty, and two more were in nearly the same condition.

To retreat in face of an enemy is at all times hazardous : but, on this occasion, it was attended with an unusual proportion of embarrassments. General Sullivan, who conducted the retreat, nevertheless, acted with so much judgment and propriety, that the baggage and public stores were saved, and the numerous sick brought off. The American army reached Crown-Point on the first of July, and at that place made their first stand.

A short time before the Americans evacuated the province of Canada, general Arnold convened the merchants of Montreal, and proposed to them to furnish a quantity of specified articles, for the use of the army in the service of congress. While they were deliberating on the subject, he placed sentinels at their shop doors, and made such arrangements, that what was at first only a request, operated as a command. A great quantity of goods were taken on pretence that they were wanted for the use of the American army, but in their number were many articles only serviceable to women, and to persons in civil life. His nephew soon after opened a store in Albany, and publicly disposed of goods which had been procured at Montreal.

The possession of Canada so eminently favoured the plans

of defence adopted by congress, that the province was evacuated with great reluctance. The Americans were not only mortified at the disappointment of their favourite scheme, of annexing it as a fourteenth link in the chain of their confederacy: but apprehended the most serious consequences from the ascendancy of the British power in that quarter. Anxious to preserve a footing there, they had persevered for a long time, in stemming the tide of unfavourable events.

General Gates was appointed to command in Canada, June 17th, 1776: but on coming to the knowledge of the late events in that province, he concluded to stop short within the limits of New York. The scene was henceforth reversed. Instead of meditating the recommencement of offensive operations, that army, which had lately excited so much terror in Canada, was called upon to be prepared for repelling an invasion threatened from that province.

The attention of the Americans being exclusively fixed on plans of defence, their general officers, commanding in the northern department, were convened to deliberate on the place and means, most suitable for that purpose. To form a judgment on this subject, a recollection of the events of the late war, between France and England, was of advantage. The same ground was to be fought over, and the same posts to be again contended for. On the confines of lake George and lake Champlain, two inland seas, which stretch almost from the sources of Hudson's river to the St. Lawrence, are situated the famous posts of Ticonderoga and Crown-Point. These are of primary necessity to any power which contends for the possession of the adjacent country; for, they afford the most convenient stand either for its annoyance or defence. In the opinion of some American officers, Crown-Point, to which the army on the evacuation of Canada had retreated, was the most proper place for erecting works of defence: but it was otherwise determined, by the council convened on this occasion. It was also by their advice resolved to move lower down, and to make the principal work on the strong ground east of Ticonderoga, and especially by every means to endeavour to maintain a naval superiority on lake Cham-

plain. In conformity to these resolutions, general Gates, with about 12,000 men, which collected in the course of the summer, was fixed in command of Ticonderoga, and a fleet was constructed at Skenesborough. This was carried on with so much rapidity, that in a short time there were afloat, in lake Champlain, one sloop, three schooners, and six gondolas, carrying in the whole 58 guns, 86 swivels, and 440 men. Six other vessels were also nearly ready for launching at the same time. The fleet was put under the command of Arnold, and he was instructed to proceed beyond Crown-Point, down lake Champlain, to the Split Rock: but most peremptorily restrained from advancing any further; for security against an apprehended invasion was the ultimate end of the armament.

The expulsion of the American invaders from Canada, was only a part of the British designs in that quarter. They urged the pursuit no further than St. John's: but, indulged in a hope of being soon in a condition for passing the lakes, and penetrating through the country to Albany, so as to form a communication with New York. The objects they had in view were great, and the obstacles in the way of their accomplishment equally so. Before they could advance with any prospect of success, a fleet, superior to that of the Americans on the lakes, was to be constructed. The materials of some large vessels were, for this purpose, brought from England: but their transportation, and the labour necessary to put them together, required both time and patience. The spirit of the British commanders rose in proportion to the difficulties which were to be encountered. Nevertheless, it was late in the month of October, before their fleet was prepared to face the American naval force, on lake Champlain. The former consisted of the ship *Inflexible*, mounting 18 twelve pounders, which was so expeditiously constructed, that she sailed from St. John's 28 days after laying her keel; one schooner mounting 14, and another 12 six pounders; a flat bottomed radeau, carrying six 24 and six 12 pounders, besides howitzers, and a gondola with seven 9 pounders. There were also twenty smaller vessels, with brass field



pieces, from 9 to 24 pounders, or with howitzers. Some long boats were furnished in the same manner. An equal number of large boats acted as tenders. Besides these vessels of war, there was a vast number destined for the transportation of the army, its stores, artillery, baggage and provisions. The whole was put under the command of captain Pringle. The naval force of the Americans, from the deficiency of means, was far short of what was brought against them. Their principal armed vessel was a schooner, which mounted only 12 six and four pounders; and their whole fleet, in addition to this, consisted of only fifteen vessels of inferior force.

No one step could be taken towards accomplishing the designs of the British, on the northern frontiers of New York, till they had the command of Lake Champlain. With this view, their fleet proceeded up the lake and engaged the Americans. The wind was so unfavourable to the British, that their ship *Inflexible*, and some other vessel of force, could not be brought into action. This lessened the inequality between the contending fleets so much, that the principal damage sustained by the Americans, was the loss of a schooner and gondola. At the approach of night, the action was discontinued. The vanquished took the advantage, which the darkness afforded, to make their escape. This was effected by general Arnold, with great judgment and ability. By the next morning, the whole fleet under his command was out of sight. The British pursued with all the sail they could crowd. The wind having become more favourable, they overtook the Americans and brought them to action near Crown-Point. A smart engagement ensued, and was well supported on both sides, for about two hours. Some of the American vessels which were most ahead escaped to Ticonderoga. Two gallies and five gondolas remained and resisted an unequal force, with a spirit approaching to desperation. One of the gallies struck and was taken. General Arnold, though he knew that to escape was impossible, and to resist unavailing, yet, instead of surrendering, determined that his people should not become prisoners, nor his vessels a reinforcement to the Bri-

tish. This spirited resolution was executed with a judgment, equal to the boldness with which it had been adopted. He ran the Congress galley, on board of which he was, together with the five gondolas, on shore, in such a position as enabled him to land his men and blow up the vessels. In the execution of this perilous enterprise, he paid a romantic attention to a point of honour. He did not quit his own galley till she was in flames, lest the British should board her and strike his flag. The result of this action, though unfavourable to the Americans, raised the reputation of general Arnold, higher than ever. In addition to the fame of a brave soldier, he acquired that of an able sea officer.

The American naval force being nearly destroyed, the British had undisputed possession of lake Champlain. On this event, a few continental troops which had been at Crown-Point, retired to their main body at Ticonderoga. General Carleton took possession of the ground from which they had retreated, and was there soon joined by his army. He sent out several reconnoitring parties, and at one time pushed forward a strong detachment on both sides of the lake, which approached near to Ticonderoga. Some British vessels appeared at the same time within cannon shot of the American works at that place. It is probable he had it in contemplation, if circumstances favoured, to reduce the post; and that the apparent strength of the works restrained him from making the attempt, and induced his return to Canada.

Such was the termination of the northern campaign, in 1776. Though after the surrender of Montreal, evacuations, defeats and retreats had almost uninterruptedly been the lot of the Americans, yet, with respect to the great object of defence on the one side, and of conquest on the other, a whole campaign was gained to them and lost to their adversaries.

The British had cleared Canada of its invaders, and destroyed the American fleet on the lakes; yet, from impediments thrown in their way, they failed in their ulterior designs. The delays, contrived by general Gates, retarded the British, for so great a part of the summer, that, by the time they had reached Ticonderoga, their retreat, on account of

the approaching winter, became immediately necessary. On the part of the Americans, some men and a few armed vessels were lost; but time was gained; their army saved; and the frontier of the adjacent states secured from a projected invasion. On the part of the British, the object of a campaign, in which 13,000 men were employed, and near a million of money expended, was rendered in a great measure abortive.

## CHAPTER X.

*Transactions in Virginia; the Carolinas; Georgia; the general state of public affairs, in the colonies in 1775. Transactions in Massachusetts; evacuation of Boston 1776.*

IT has already been mentioned that the colonists, from the rising of Congress, in October, 1774, and particularly after the Lexington battle, were attentive to the training of their militia, and making the necessary preparations for their defence.

The effects of their arrangements, for this purpose, varied with circumstances.

Where there were no royal troops, and where ordinary prudence was observed, the public peace was undisturbed. In other cases, the intemperate zeal of governors, and the imprudent warmth of the people, anticipated the calamities of war. Virginia, though there was not a single British soldier within its limits, was, by the indiscretion of its governor lord Dunmore, involved for several months in difficulties, little short of those to which the inhabitants of Massachusetts were subjected. His lordship was very unfit to be at the helm, in this tempestuous season. His passions predominated over his understanding, and precipitated him into measures injurious both to the people whom he governed, and to the interest of his royal master. The Virginians, from the earliest stages of the controversy, had been in the foremost line of opposition to the claims of Great Britain; but, at the same time, treated lord Dunmore with the attention that was due to his station. In common with the other provinces, they had taken effectual measures to prepare their militia, for the purposes of defence.

While they were pursuing this object, his lordship engaged a party, belonging to a royal vessel in James' river, to convey some public powder from a magazine in Williamsburg, on board their ship. The value or quantity of the powder was



inconsiderable; but, the circumstances attending its removal begat suspicions, that lord Dunmore meant to deprive the inhabitants of the means of defence. They were, therefore, alarmed, and assembled with arms to demand its restitution. By the interposition of the mayor and corporation of Williamsburg, extremities were prevented. Reports were soon afterwards spread, that a second attempt to rob the magazine was intended. The inhabitants again took arms and instituted nightly patrols, with a determined resolution to protect it. The governor was irritated at these commotions, and, in the warmth of his temper, threatened to set up the royal standard, enfranchise the negroes, and arm them against their masters. This irritated, but did not intimidate. Several public meetings were held in the different counties, in all of which, the removal of the powder from the magazine, and the governor's threats, were severely condemned. Some of the gentlemen of Hanover, and the neighbouring counties, assembled in arms, under the conduct of Mr. Patrick Henry, and marched towards Williamsburg, with an avowed design to obtain restitution of the powder, and to take measures for securing the public treasury. This ended in a negociation, by which it was agreed, that payment for the powder, by the receiver general of the colony, should be accepted in lieu of restitution; and, that, upon the engagement of the inhabitants of Williamsburg to guard both the treasury and the magazine, the armed parties should return to their habitations.

The alarm of this affair induced lord Dunmore to send his lady and family on board the Fowey man of war, in James' river. About the same time, his lordship, with the assistance of a detachment of marines, fortified his palace, and surrounded it with artillery. He soon after issued a proclamation, in which Mr. Henry and his associates were charged with rebellious practices; and the existing commotions were attributed to a desire in the people, of changing the established form of government. Several meetings were held in the neighbouring counties, in which, the conduct of Henry and of his associates was applauded; and resolutions were adopted, that, at every risk, he and they should be indemnified.

About this time, copies of some letters from governor Dunmore, to the minister of the American department, were made public. These, in the opinion of the Virginians, contained unfair and unjust representations of facts, and also of their temper and disposition. Many severe things were said on both sides, and fame, as usual, magnified or misrepresented whatever was said or done. One distrust begat another. Every thing tended to produce a spirit of discontent, and the fever of the public mind daily increased.

In this state of disorder, the governor convened the general assembly. The leading motive, for this unexpected measure, was to procure their approbation and acceptance of the terms of the conciliatory motion, agreed to in parliament, on the 20th of the preceding February. His lordship introduced this to their consideration, in a long and plausible speech. In a few days, they presented their address in answer; in which, among other grounds of rejection, they stated that, "the proposed plan only changed the form of oppression, without lessening its burden;" but, they referred the papers for a final determination, to congress. For themselves they declared: "We have exhausted every mode of application, which our invention could suggest, as proper and promising. We have decently remonstrated with parliament; they have added new injuries to the old. We have wearied our king with supplications; he has not deigned to answer us. We have appealed to the native honour and justice of the British nation; their efforts in our favour have been hitherto ineffectual."

The assembly, among their first acts, appointed a committee to enquire into the causes of the late disturbances; and particularly to examine the state of the magazine. They found most of the remaining powder buried; the muskets deprived of their locks; and spring guns planted in the magazine. These discoveries irritated the people, and occasioned intemperate expressions of resentment. Lord Dunmore quitted the palace privately, and retired on board the *Fowey* man of war, which then lay near York-Town. He left a message for the house of burgesses, acquainting them, "that he

thought it prudent to retire to a place of safety, having reason to believe that he was in constant danger of falling a sacrifice to popular fury. He, nevertheless, hoped that they would proceed in the great business before them; and he engaged to render the communication between him and the house, as easy and as safe as possible. He assured them that he could attend, as heretofore, to the duties of his office; and that he was well disposed to restore that harmony which had been unhappily interrupted."

This message produced a joint address from the council and house of burgesses; in which, they represented his lordship's fears to be groundless, and declared their willingness to concur in any measure he would propose for the security of himself and family; and concluded, by intreating his return to the palace. Lord Dunmore, in a reply, justified his apprehensions of danger, from the threats which had been repeatedly thrown out. He charged the house of burgesses with countenancing the violent proceedings of the people, and with a design to usurp the executive power, and subvert the constitution. This produced a reply fraught with recrimination and defensive arguments. Every incident afforded fresh room for altercation. There was a continued intercourse by addresses, messages and answers, between the house of burgesses and the Fowey: but little of the public business was completed. His lordship was still acknowledged as the lawful governor of the province: but did not think proper to set his foot on shore, in the country over which his functions were to be exercised.

At length, when the necessary bills were ready for ratification, the council and burgesses jointly intreated the governor's presence, to give his assent to them and finish the session. After several messages and answers, lord Dunmore peremptorily refused to meet the assembly at the capital, their usual place of deliberation: but, said he would be ready to receive them on the next Monday, at his present residence on board the Fowey, for the purpose of giving his assent to such bills as he should approve of. Upon receiving this answer, the house of burgesses passed resolutions, in which they de-

clared, that the message, requiring them to attend the governor on board a ship of war, was a high breach of their rights and privileges; that they had reason to fear a dangerous attack was meditated against the colony; and it was, therefore, their opinion, that they should prepare for the preservation of their rights and liberties. After strongly professing loyalty to the king, and amity to the mother country, they broke up their session. The royal government in Virginia, from that day, July 10th, 1775, ceased. Soon afterwards, a convention of delegates was appointed, to supply the place of the assembly. As these had an unlimited confidence reposed in them, they became at once possessed of undefined discretionary powers, both legislative and executive. They exercised this authority, for the security of their constituents. They raised and embodied an armed force, and took measures for putting the colony in a state of defence. They published a justification of their conduct, and set forth the necessity of the measures they had adopted. They concluded with professions of loyalty, and declared, that though they were determined at every hazard to maintain their rights and privileges, it was also their fixed resolution to disband such forces as were raised for the defence of the colony, whenever their danger was removed. The headstrong passions of lord Dunmore precipitated him into further follies. With the aid of the loyalists, run-away negroes, and some frigates that were on the station, he established a marine force. By degrees, he equipped and armed a number of vessels, of different kinds and sizes, in one of which he constantly resided, except when he went on shore, in a hostile manner. This force was calculated only for depredation, and never became equal to any essential service. Obnoxious persons were seized and taken on board. Negroes were carried off; plantations ravaged; and houses burnt. These proceedings occasioned the sending of some detachments, of the newly raised provincial forces, to protect the coasts. This produced a predatory war, from which neither honour nor benefit could be acquired, and in which, every supply from the shore was purchased at the risk of blood. The forces under



his lordship attempted to burn Hampton: but the crews of the royal vessels employed in that business, though they had begun to cannonade it, were so annoyed by riflemen from the shore, that they were obliged to quit their station. In a few days after this repulse, Nov. 7th, 1775, a proclamation was issued by the governor, dated on board the ship *William*, off Norfolk, declaring that, as the civil law was at present insufficient to punish treason and traitors, martial law should take place, and be executed throughout the colony; and requiring all persons capable of bearing arms, to repair to his majesty's standard, or to be considered as traitors. He also declared all indented servants, negroes and others, appertaining to rebels, who were able and willing to bear arms, and who joined his majesty's forces, to be free.

Among the circumstances which induced the rulers of Great Britain to count on an easy conquest of America, the great number of slaves had a considerable weight. On the sea coast of five of the most southern provinces, the number of slaves exceeded that of freemen. It was supposed that the proffer of freedom would detach them from their master's interest, and bind them by strong ties to support the royal standard. Perhaps, under favourable circumstances, these expectations would in some degree have been realized; but lord Dunmore's indiscretion deprived his royal master of this resource. Six months had elapsed, since his lordship first threatened its adoption. The negroes had in a great measure ceased to believe, and the inhabitants to fear. It excited less surprise, and produced less effect, than if it had been more immediate and unexpected. The country was now in a tolerable state of defence, and the force for protecting the negroes, in case they had closed with his lordship's offer, was far short of what would have been necessary for their security. The injury, done the royal cause by the bare proposal of the scheme, far out-weighed any advantage that resulted from it. The colonists were struck with horror, and filled with detestation of a government, which was exercised in loosening the bands of society, and destroying domestic security. The union and vigour, which were given to their opposition,

was great, while the additional force, acquired by his lordship, was inconsiderable. It nevertheless produced some effect in Norfolk and the adjoining country, where his lordship was joined by several hundreds, both whites and blacks. The governor, having once more got footing on the main, amused himself with hopes of acquiring the glory of reducing one part of the province by means of the other. The provincials had now an object, against which they might direct their arms. An expedition was therefore concerted against the force which had taken post at Norfolk. To protect his adherents, lord Dunmore constructed a fort at the great bridge, on the Norfolk side, and furnished it with artillery. The provincials also fortified themselves, near to the same place, with a narrow causeway in their front. In this state, both parties continued quiet for some days. The royalists commenced an attack. Captain Fordyce, at the head of about 60 British grenadiers, passed the causeway, and boldly marched up to the provincial intrenchments with fixed bayonets. They were exposed, without cover, to the fire of the provincials in front, and enfiladed by another part of their works. The brave captain and several of his men fell. The lieutenant, with others, was taken, and all who survived were wounded. The slaves in this engagement were more prejudicial to their British employers than to the provincials. Captain Fordyce was interred by the victors, with military honours. The English prisoners were treated with kindness; but the Americans, who had joined the king's standard, experienced the resentment of their countrymen.

The royal forces, on the ensuing night, evacuated their post at the great bridge: lord Dunmore shortly afterwards abandoned Norfolk, and retired with his people on board his ships. Many of the tories, a name which was given to those who adhered to the royal interest, sought the same asylum, for themselves and moveable effects. The provincials took possession of Norfolk, and the fleet, with its new incumbrances, moved to a greater distance. The people on board cut off from all peaceable intercourse with the shore, were distressed for provisions and necessaries of every kind. This occasion-

ed sundry unimportant contests, between the provincial forces and the armed ships and boats. At length, on the arrival of the Liverpool man of war from England, a flag was sent on shore, to put the question, whether they would supply his majesty's ships with provisions? An answer was returned in the negative. It was then determined to destroy the town. This was carried into effect; and, Jan. 1, 1776, Norfolk was reduced to ashes. The whole loss was estimated at 300,000*l.* sterling. The provincials, to deprive the ships of every source of supply, destroyed the houses and plantations that were near the water, and obliged the people to move their cattle, provisions, and effects, further into the country. Lord Dunmore, with his fleet, continued for several months on the coast, and in the rivers of Virginia. His unhappy followers suffered a complication of distresses. The scarcity of water and provisions, the closeness and filth of the small vessels, produced diseases which were fatal to many, especially to the negroes. Though his whole force was trifling when compared with the resources of Virginia; yet the want of suitable armed vessels made its expulsion impracticable. The experience of that day evinced the inadequacy of land forces, for the defence of a maritime country; and the extensive mischief which may be done, by even an inconsiderable marine, when unopposed in its own way. The want of a navy was both seen and felt. Some arrangements to procure one were therefore made. Either the expectation of an attack from this quarter, or the sufferings of the crews on board, induced his lordship, in the summer of 1776, to burn the least valuable of his vessels, and to send the remainder, amounting to 30 or 40 sail, to Florida, Bermuda, and the West Indies. The hopes which lord Dunmore had entertained of subduing Virginia, by the co-operation of the negroes, terminated with this movement. The unhappy Africans, who had engaged in it, are said to have almost universally perished.

While these transactions were carrying on, another scheme, in which lord Dunmore was a party, in like manner miscarried. It was in contemplation to raise a considerable force at the back of the colonies, particularly in Virginia and

the Carolinas. Connelly, a native of Pennsylvania, was the framer of the design. He had gained the approbation of lord Dunmore, and had been sent to him by general Gage at Boston, and from him he received a commission to act as colonel commandant. It was intended that the British garrisons at Detroit, and some other remote posts, with their artillery and ammunition, should be subservient to this design. Connelly also hoped for the aid of the Canadians and Indians. He was authorised to grant commissions, and to have the supreme direction of the new forces. As soon as they were in readiness he was to penetrate through Virginia, and to meet lord Dunmore near Alexandria, on the river Potomac. Connelly was taken up on suspicion, by one of the committees in Maryland, while on his way to the scene of action. The papers found in his possession betrayed the whole. Among those, were a general sketch of the plan and a letter from lord Dunmore to one of the Indian chiefs. He was imprisoned, and the papers published. So many fortunate escapes induced a belief among serious Americans, that their cause was favoured by heaven. The various projects which were devised, and put in operation against them, pointed out the increasing necessity of union; while the havoc made on their coasts, the proffer of freedom to their slaves, and the encouragement proposed to Indians, for making war on their frontier inhabitants, quickened their resentment against Great Britain.

North Carolina was more fortunate than Virginia. The governors of both were perhaps equally zealous for the royal interest, and the people of both equally attached to the cause of America: but the former escaped with a smaller portion of public calamity. Several regulations were at this time adopted by most of the provinces. Councils of safety, committees, and conventions, were common substitutes for regular government. Similar plans for raising, arming and supporting troops, and for training the militia, were, from north to south, generally adopted. In like manner, royal governors, throughout the provinces, were exerting themselves in attaching the people to the schemes of Great Britain. Governor Martin, of North Carolina, was particularly zealous in



this business. He fortified and armed his palace at Newbern, that it might answer the double purpose of a garrison and magazine. While he was thus employed, such commotions were excited among the people, that he thought it expedient to retire on board a sloop of war in Cape Fear river. The people found powder and various military stores, which had been buried in his garden and yard. Governor Martin, though he had abandoned his usual place of residence, continued his exertions for reducing North Carolina to obedience. He particularly addressed himself to the regulators and Highland emigrants. The former had acquired this name from attempting to regulate the administration of justice, in the remote settlements, in a summary manner, subversive of the public peace. They had suffered the consequences of opposing royal government, and, from obvious principles of human nature, were disposed to support the authority, whose power to punish, they had recently experienced. The Highland emigrants had been only a short time in America, and were yet more under the influence of European ideas, than those which their new situation was calculated to inspire. Governor Martin sent commissions among these people, for raising and commanding regiments; and he granted one to Mr. M'Donald, to act as their general. He also sent them a proclamation, commanding all persons, on their allegiance, to repair to the royal standard. This was erected by general M'Donald, about the middle of February. Upon the first intelligence of their assembling, brigadier general Moore, with some provincial troops and militia, and some pieces of cannon, marched to oppose them. He took possession of Rock-fish bridge, and threw up some works. He had not been there many days, when M'Donald approached; and sent a letter to Moore, enclosing the governor's proclamation, and advising him and his party to join the king's standard; and adding, that, in case of refusal, they must be treated as enemies. To this Moore replied, that he and his officers considered themselves as engaged in a cause, the most glorious and honourable in the world, the defence of mankind; and in his turn offered, that if M'Donald's party

laid down their arms they should be received as friends : but, otherwise, they must expect consequences, similar to those which they threatened. Soon after this, general M'Donald, with his adherents, pushed on to join governor Martin : but colonels Lillington and Caswell, with about 1000 militia men, took possession of Moore's creek bridge, which lay in their way, and raised a small breast work to secure themselves.

On the next morning, the Highland emigrants attacked the militia posted at the bridge ; but M'Cleod, the second in command, and some more of their officers being killed at the first onset, they fled with precipitation. General M'Donald was taken prisoner, and the whole of the party broken and dispersed. This overthrow produced consequences very injurious to the British interest. A royal fleet and army was expected on the coast. A junction formed between them and the Highland emigrants, in the interior country, might have made a sensible impression on the province. From an eagerness to do something, the insurgents prematurely took arms, and being crushed before the arrival of proper support, their spirits were so entirely broken, that no future effort could be expected from them.

While the war raged only in Massachusetts, each province conducted as if it expected to be the next attacked. Georgia, though a majority of its inhabitants were at first against the measures, yet, about the middle of this year, joined the other colonies. Having not concurred in the petitions from congress to the king, they petitioned by themselves : and stated their rights and grievances, in firm and decided language. They also adopted the continental association, and sent on their deputies to congress.

In South Carolina, there was an eagerness to be prepared for defence, which was not surpassed in any of the provinces. Regiments were raised ; forts were built ; the militia trained ; and every necessary preparation made for that purpose. Lord William Campbell, the royal governor, endeavoured to form a party for the support of government, and was in some degree successful. Distrusting his personal safety on shore,

about the middle of September, he took up his residence on board an armed vessel, then in the harbour.

The royal government still existed in name and form ; but the real power, which the people obeyed, was exercised by a provincial congress, a council of safety, and subordinate committees. To conciliate the friendship of the Indians, the popular leaders sent a small supply of powder into their country. They who were opposed to congress embodied, and robbed the waggons which were employed in its transportation. To inflame the minds of their adherents, they propagated a report that the powder was intended to be given to the Indians, for the purpose of massacring the friends of royal government. The inhabitants took arms, some to support royal government, but more to support the American measures. The royalists acted feebly and were easily overpowered. They were disheartened by the superior numbers that opposed them. They every where gave way, and were obliged either to fly or feign submission. Solicitations had been made about this time for royal forces to awe the southern provinces ; but without effect, till the proper season was over. One scheme for this purpose was frustrated by a singular device. Private intelligence had been received of an express being sent from sir James Wright, governor of Georgia, to general Gage. By him the necessity of ordering a part of the royal army to the southward was fully stated. The express was waylaid, and compelled by two gentlemen to deliver his letters. One to general Gage was kept back, and another one forwarded in its room. The seal and hand writing were so exactly imitated that the deception was not suspected. The forged letter was received and acted upon. It stated the degree of peace and tranquility to be such as induced an opinion, that there was no necessity of sending royal troops to the southward. While these states were thus left to themselves, they had time and opportunity to prepare for extremities ; and, in the mean time, the friends of royal government were severally crushed. A series of disasters followed the royal cause in the year 1775. General Gage's army was cooped up in Boston and rendered useless. In the southern states, where a small force would

have made an impression, the royal governors were unsupported. Much was done to irritate the colonists, and to cement their union; but very little, either in the way of conquest or concession, to subdue their spirits or conciliate their affections.

In this year, the people of America generally took the side of the colonies. Every art was made use of, by the popular leaders, to attach the inhabitants to their cause; nor were the votaries of the royal interest inactive: but little impression was made by the latter, except among the uninformed. The great mass of the wealth, learning, and influence, in all the southern colonies, and in most of the northern, was in favour of the American cause. Some aged persons were exceptions to the contrary. Attached to ancient habits, and enjoying the fruits of their industry, they were slow in approving new measures, subversive of the former, and endangering the latter. A few, who had basked in the sunshine of court favour, were restrained by honour, principle and interest, from forsaking the fountain of their enjoyments. Some feared the power of Britain, and others doubted the perseverance of America; but, a great majority resolved to hazard every thing, in preference to a tame submission. In the beginning of the year 1776, the colonists were farmers, merchants and mechanics: but in its close, they had assumed the profession of soldiers. So sudden a transformation of so numerous, and so dispersed a people, is without a parallel.

This year was also remarkable for the general termination of royal government. This was effected without any violence to its executive officers. The new system was not so much forcibly imposed, or designedly adopted, as introduced through necessity, and the imperceptible agency of a common danger, operating uniformly on the mind of the public. The royal governors, for the most part, voluntarily abdicated their governments, and retired on board ships of war. They assigned for reason, that they apprehended personal danger; but this, in every instance, was unfounded. Perhaps, these representatives of royalty thought, that as they were constitutionally necessary to the administration of justice, the hor-



rors of anarchy would deter the people from prosecuting their opposition. If they acted from this principle, they were mistaken. Their withdrawing from the exercise of their official duties both furnished an apology, and induced a necessity for organizing a system of government, independent of royal authority. By encouraging opposition to the popular measures, they involved their friends in distress. The unsuccessful insurrections, which they fomented, being improperly timed, and unsupported, were easily overthrown; and actually strengthened the popular government, which they meant to destroy.

As the year 1775 drew near to a close, the friends of congress were embarrassed with a new difficulty. Their army was temporary, and only engaged to serve out the year. The object, for which they had taken up arms, was not obtained. Every reason, which had previously induced the provinces to embody a military force, still existed, and with increasing weight. It was therefore resolved to form a new army. The same flattering hopes were indulged, that an army for the ensuing year would answer every purpose. A committee of congress, consisting of Dr. Franklin, Mr. Lynch, and Mr. Harrison, repaired to head quarters at Cambridge: and there, in conjunction with general Washington, made arrangements for organizing an army for the year 1776. It was presumed that the spirit, which had hitherto operated on the yeomanry of the country, would induce most of the same individuals to engage for another twelvemonth; but on experiment it was found that much of their military ardour had already evaporated. The first impulse of passion, and the novelty of the scene, had brought many to the field, who had great objections against continuing in the military line. They found, that to be soldiers required sacrifices of which, when they assumed that character, they had no idea. So unacquainted were the bulk of the people with the mode of carrying on modern war, that many of them flew to arms, with the delusive expectation of settling the whole dispute, by a few decisive and immediate engagements. Experience soon taught them, that to risk life in open fighting was but a part of

a soldier's duty. Several of the inferior officers retired; the men frequently refused to enlist, unless they were allowed to choose their officers. Others would not engage unless they were indulged with furloughs. Fifty would apply together for leave of absence; indulgence threatened less ruinous consequences than a refusal would probably have produced. On the whole, enlistments went on slowly. Though the recruits for the new army had not arrived; yet, the Connecticut troops, whose time expired on the first of December, could not be persuaded to continue in service. On their way home, several of them were stopped by the country people, and compelled to return. When every thing seemed to be exposed, by the departure of so great a part of the late army, the militia were called on for a temporary aid. A new difficulty obstructed, as well the recruiting of the army, as the coming in of the militia. Sundry persons, infected with the small pox, were sent out of Boston and landed at Point Shirley. Such was the dread of that disease, that the British army scarcely excited equal terror. So many difficulties retarded the recruiting service, that on the last day of the year, 1775, the whole American army amounted to no more than 9650 men. Of the remarkable events, with which the subsequent important year was replete, it was not the least, that, within musket shot of twenty British regiments, one army was disbanded, and another enlisted,

All this time the British troops at Boston were suffering the inconvenience of a blockade. From the 19th of April, they were cut off from those refreshments which their situation required. Their supplies from Britain did not reach the coast, for a long time after they were expected. Several were taken by the American cruisers, and others were lost at sea. This was in particular the fate of many of their coal ships. The want of fuel was particularly felt, in a climate where the winter is both severe and tedious. They relieved themselves, in part, from their sufferings on this account, by the timber of houses, which they pulled down and burnt. Vessels were despatched to the West Indies to procure provisions: but the islands were so straitened, that they could afford little assist-

ance. Armed ships and transports were ordered to Georgia, with an intent to procure rice: but the people of that province, with the aid of a party from South Carolina, so effectually opposed them, that, of eleven vessels, only two got off safe with their cargoes. It was not till the stock of the garrison was nearly exhausted, that the transports from England entered the port of Boston, and relieved the distresses of the garrison.

While the troops within the lines were apprehensive of suffering from want of provisions, the troops without were equally uneasy for want of employment. Used to labour and motion on their farms, they could not brook the inactivity and confinement of a camp life. Fiercy spirits declaimed in favour of an assault. They preferred a bold spirit of enterprise, to that passive fortitude, which bears up under present evils, while it waits for favourable junctures. To be in readiness for an attempt of this kind, a council of war recommended to call in 7280 militia men, from New Hampshire or Connecticut. This number, added to the regular army before Boston, would have made an operating force of about 17,000 men.

The provincials laboured under great inconveniences from the want of arms and ammunition. Very early in the contest, the king of Great Britain, by proclamation, forbade the exportation of warlike stores to the colonies. Great exertions had been made to manufacture saltpetre and gunpowder: but the supply was slow and inadequate. A secret committee of congress had been appointed, with ample powers to lay in a stock of this necessary article. Some swift sailing vessels had been despatched to the coast of Africa, to purchase what could be procured in that distant region. A party from Charleston forcibly took about 17,000 lbs. of powder, from a vessel near the bar of St. Augustine. Some time after, commodore Hopkins stripped Providence, one of the Bahama islands, of a quantity of artillery and stores; but the whole, procured from all these quarters, was far short of a sufficiency. In order to supply the new army before Boston, with the necessary means of defence, an application was made to Massa-

chusetts for arms: but, on examination, it was found that their public stores afforded only 200. Orders were issued to purchase firelocks from private persons: but few had any to sell, and fewer would part with them. In the month of February, there were 2000 of the American infantry, who were destitute of arms. Powder was equally scarce, and yet daily applications were made for dividends of the small quantity which was on hand, for the defence of various parts threatened with invasion. The eastern colonies presented an unusual sight. A powerful enemy safely intrenched in their first city, while a fleet was ready to transport them to any part of the coast. A numerous body of husbandmen was resolutely bent on opposition: but without the necessary arms and ammunition for self-defence. The eyes of all were fixed on general Washington; and it was unreasonably expected, that he would, by a bold exertion, free the town of Boston from the British troops. The dangerous situation of public affairs led him to conceal the real scarcity of arms and ammunition; and, with that magnanimity which is characteristic of great minds, to suffer his character to be assailed, rather than vindicate himself, by exposing his many wants. There were not wanting persons, who, judging from the superior numbers of men in the American army, boldly asserted, that, if the commander in chief were not desirous of prolonging his importance at the head of an army, he might, by a vigorous exertion, gain possession of Boston. Such suggestions were reported and believed by several, while they were uncontradicted by the general, who chose to risk his fame, rather than expose his army and his country.

Agreeably to the request of the council of war, about 7000 of the militia had rendezvoused in February. General Washington stated to his officers, that the troops in camp, together with the reinforcements which had been called for, and were daily coming in, would amount nearly to 17,000 men; that he had not powder sufficient for a bombardment; and asked their advice whether, as reinforcements might be daily expected to the enemy, it would not be prudent, before that event took place, to make an assault on the British lines. The



proposition was negatived: but it was recommended to take possession of Dorchester heights. To conceal this design, and to divert the attention of the garrison, a bombardment of the town from other directions commenced, and was carried on for three days, with as much briskness as a deficient stock of powder would admit. In this first essay, three of the mortars were broken, either from a defect in their construction, or, more probably, from ignorance of the proper mode of using them.

The night of the 4th of March was fixed upon for taking possession of Dorchester heights. A covering party of about 800 men led the way. These were followed by the carts, with the intrenching tools, and 1200 of a working party, commanded by general Thomas. In the rear, there were more than 200 carts, loaded with fascines, and hay in bundles. While the cannon were playing in other parts, the greatest silence was kept by this working party. The active zeal of the industrious provincials completed lines of defence, by morning, which astonished the garrison. The difference between Dorchester heights on the evening of the 4th, and the morning of the 5th, seemed to realize the tales of romance. The admiral informed general Howe, that if the Americans kept possession of these heights, he would not be able to keep one of his majesty's ships in the harbour. It was therefore determined in a council of war, to attempt to dislodge them. An engagement was hourly expected. It was intended by general Washington, in that case, to force his way into Boston with 4000 men, who were to have embarked at the mouth of Cambridge river. The militia had come forward with great alertness, each bringing three days provision, in expectation of an immediate assault. The men were in high spirits, and impatiently waiting for the appeal.

They were reminded that it was the 5th of March, and were called upon to avenge the death of their countrymen killed on that day. The many eminences in and near Boston, which overlooked the ground on which it was expected that the contending parties would engage, were crowded with numerous spectators: but general Howe did not intend to at-

tack until the next day. In the night, a most violent storm, and, towards morning, a heavy flood of rain, came on. A carnage was thus providentially prevented, that would probably have equalled, if not exceeded, the fatal 17th of June, at Bunker's-hill. In this situation, it was agreed by the British, in a council of war, to evacuate the town as soon as possible.

In a few days after, a flag came out of Boston, with a paper signed by four selectmen, informing, "that they had applied to general Robertson, who, on an application to general Howe, was authorised to assure them, that he had no intention of burning the town, unless the troops under his command were molested, during their embarkation, or at their departure, by the armed force without." When this paper was presented to general Washington, he replied, "that as it was an unauthenticated paper, and without an address, and not obligatory on general Howe, he could take no notice of it;" but at the same time intimated his good wishes for the security of the town.

A proclamation was issued by general Howe, ordering all woollen and linen goods to be delivered to Crean Brush, Esq. Shops were opened and stripped of their goods. A licentious plundering took place. Much was carried off, and more was wantonly destroyed. These irregularities were forbidden in orders, and the guilty threatened with death; but nevertheless, great mischief was committed.

The British, amounting to more than 7000 men, evacuated Boston, March 17th, 1776; leaving their barracks standing; a number of pieces of cannon spiked; four large iron sea mortars; and stores to the value of 30,000*l*. They demolished the castle, and knocked off the trunnions of the cannon. Various incidents caused a delay of nine days after the evacuation, before they left Nantasket road.

This embarkation was attended with many circumstances of distress and embarrassment. On the departure of the royal army from Boston, a great number of the inhabitants attached to their sovereign, and afraid of public resentment, chose to abandon their country. From the great multitude about to

depart, there was no possibility of procuring purchasers for their furniture; neither was there a sufficiency of vessels for its convenient transportation. Mutual jealousy subsisted between the army and navy; each charging the other as the cause of their common distress. The army was full of discontent. Reinforcements, though long promised, had not arrived. Both officers and soldiers thought themselves neglected. Five months had elapsed since they had received any advice of their destination. Wants and inconveniences increased their ill humour. Their intended voyage to Halifax subjected them to great dangers. The coast, at all times hazardous, was eminently so at that tempestuous equinoctial season. They had reason to fear, that they would be blown off, to the West Indies, and without a sufficient stock of provisions. They were also going to a barren country. To add to their difficulties, this dangerous voyage, when completed, was directly so much out of their way. Their business lay to the southward; and they were going northward. Under all these difficulties, and with all these gloomy prospects, the fleet steered for Halifax. Contrary to appearances, the voyage thither was both short and prosperous. They remained there for some time, waiting for reinforcements and instructions from England. When the royal fleet and army departed from Boston, several ships were left behind, for the protection of vessels coming from England; but the American privateers were so alert, that they nevertheless made many prizes. Some of the vessels which they captured, were laden with arms and warlike stores. Some transports, with troops on board, were also taken. These had run into the harbour, not knowing that the place was evacuated. The boats employed in the embarkation of the British troops, had scarcely completed their business, when general Washington, with his army, marched into Boston. He was received with marks of approbation more flattering than the pomps of a triumph. The inhabitants released from the severities of a garrison life, and from the various indignities to which they were subjected, hailed him as their deliverer. The evacuation of Boston had been pre<sup>re-</sup>

viously determined upon, by the British ministry, from principles of political expediency. Being resolved to carry on the war, for purposes affecting all the colonies, they conceived a central position to be preferable to Boston. Policy of this kind had induced the adoption of the measure; but the American works on Roxbury expedited its execution.



## CHAPTER XI.

*The Proceedings of Parliament, against the Colonies, 1775-6;  
Operations in South Carolina, New York, and New Jersey.*

The operations, carried on against the united colonies, in the year 1775, were adapted to cases of criminal combination, among subjects not in arms. The military arrangements for that year, were therefore made on the idea of a trifling addition to a peace establishment. It was either not known, that a majority of the Americans had determined to resist the power of Great Britain, rather than submit to the coercive laws, or it was not believed that they had spirit sufficient to act in conformity to that determination. The propensity in human nature, to believe that to be true, which is wished to be so, had deceived the royal servants in America, and the British ministry in England, so far as to induce their general belief, that a determined spirit on the part of government, and a few thousand troops to support that determination, would easily compose the troubles in America. Their military operations, in the year 1775, were therefore calculated on the small scale of strengthening the civil power, and not on the large one of resisting an organized army. Though it had been declared by parliament in February, 1775, that a rebellion existed in Massachusetts, yet it was not believed that the colonists would dare to abet their opposition by an armed force. The resistance made by the militia at Lexington, the consequent military arrangements adopted, first by Massachusetts, and afterwards by congress, together with the defence of Bunker's-hill, all conspired to prove that the Americans were far from being contemptible adversaries. The nation, finding itself, by a fatal progression of the unhappy dispute, involved in a civil war, was roused to recollection. Though several corporate bodies, and sundry distinguished individuals in Great Britain, were opposed to coercive measures, yet there was a majority for proceeding. The pride of

the nation was interested in humbling the colonists, who had dared to resist the power which had lately triumphed over the combined force of France and Spain. The prospect of freeing their own estates from a part of the heavy taxes charged thereon, induced numbers of the landed gentlemen in Great Britain to support the same measures. They conceived the coercion of the colonies to be the most direct mode of securing their contribution towards sinking the national debt. Influenced by these opinions, they not only justified the adoption of rigorous measures, but cheerfully consented to present additional taxes, with the same spirit which induces litigants in private life, to advance money for forwarding a lawsuit, from the termination of which great profits are expected. Lord North, the prime minister of England, finding himself supported by so many powerful interests, was encouraged to proceed. He had already subdued a powerful party in the city of London, and triumphed over the East India company. The submission of the colonies was only wanting to complete the glory of his administration. Previous success emboldened him to attempt the arduous business. He flattered himself, that the accomplishment of it would not only restore peace to the empire, but give a brilliancy to his name, far exceeding that of any of his predecessors.

Such was the temper of a great part of the nation, and such the ambitious views of its prime minister; when the parliament was convened, on the 24th of October, 1775. In the speech from the throne, great complaints were made of the leaders in the colonies, who were said, by their misrepresentations, to have infused into the minds of the deluded multitude, opinions repugnant to their constitutional subordination; and afterwards to have proceeded to the commencement of hostilities, and the usurpation of the whole powers of government. His majesty also charged his subjects in America, with “ meaning only to amuse by vague expressions of attachment to the parent state, while they were preparing for a general revolt.” And he further asserted, “ that the rebellious war now levied by them was become more general, and manifestly carried on for the purpose of establishing an

independent empire; and that it had become the part of wisdom, and, in its effects, of clemency, to put a speedy end to these disorders, by the most decisive exertions."

Information was also given, that "the most friendly offers of foreign assistance had been received; and that his majesty's electoral troops were sent to the garrison of Gibraltar and Port Mahon, in order that a large number of the established forces of the kingdom might be applied to the maintenance of its authority." The severity of these assertions was mitigated by a declaration, "that when the unhappy and deluded multitude, against whom this force should be directed, would become sensible of their error, his majesty would be ready to receive the misled with tenderness and mercy;" and "that to prevent inconveniences, he should give authority to certain persons on the spot, to grant general or particular pardons and indemnities, to such as should be disposed to return to their allegiance." The sentiments expressed in this speech, and the heavy charges therein laid against the colonists, were re-echoed in addresses to the king from both houses of parliament, but not without a spirited protest in the house of lords. In this, nineteen dissenting members asserted the American war to be "unjust and impolitic in its principles, and fatal in its consequences." They also declared, that they could not consent to an address, "which might deceive his majesty and the public, into a belief of the confidence of their house in the present ministers, who had disgraced parliament; deceived the nation; lost the colonies; and involved them in a civil war against their clearest interests, and, upon the most unjustifiable grounds, wantonly spilling the blood of thousands of their fellow subjects."

The sanction of parliament being obtained for a vigorous prosecution of the American war, estimates for the public service were agreed to, on the idea of operating against the colonies, as an hostile armed foreign power. To this end, it was voted to employ 28,000 seamen, and 55,000 land forces; and authority was given to engage foreign mercenaries. No ministry had, in any preceding war, exerted them-

selves more to prosecute military operations against alien enemies, than the present to make the ensuing campaign decisive of the dispute, between the mother country and the colonies. One legislative act was still wanting, to give full efficacy to the intended prosecution of hostilities. This was brought into parliament, in a bill interdicting all trade and intercourse with the thirteen united colonies, Nov. 20th, 1775. By it, all property of Americans, whether of ships or goods, on the high seas, or in harbour, was declared "to be forfeited to the captors, being the officers and crews of his majesty's ships of war." It further enacted, "that the masters, crews and other persons found on board captured American vessels, should be entered on board his majesty's vessels of war, and there considered to be in his majesty's service, to all intents and purposes, as if they had entered of their own accord." This bill also authorised the crown to appoint commissioners, who, over and above granting pardons to individuals, were empowered to "enquire into general and particular grievances, and to determine whether any colony, or part of a colony, had returned to that state of obedience, which might entitle it to be received within the king's peace and protection." In that case, upon a declaration from the commissioners, "the restrictions of the proposed law were to cease."

It was said in favour of this bill, "that as the Americans were already in a state of war, it became necessary that hostilities should be carried on against them, as was usual against alien enemies; that the more vigorously and extensively military operations were prosecuted, the sooner would peace and order be restored; that as the commissioners went out with the sword in one hand, and terms of conciliation in the other, it was in the power of the colonists to prevent the infliction of any real or apparent severities, in the proposed statute."

In opposition, it was said, "that treating the Americans as a foreign nation, was chalking out the way for their independence." One member observed, that as the indiscriminate rapine of property authorised by the bill, would oblige the



colonists to coalesce as one man, its title ought to be: "A bill for carrying more effectually into execution the resolves of congress." The clause, for vesting the property of the seizures in the captors, was reprobated as tending to extinguish in the breasts of seamen the principles of patriotism; of national pride and glory; and to substitute in their room, habits of cruelty, of piracy and robbery. But of all parts of this bill, none was so severely condemned as that clause, by which persons, taken on board the American vessels, were indiscriminately compelled to serve as common sailors in British ships of war. This was said to be "a refinement of tyranny worse than death." It was also said, "that no man could be despoiled of his goods as a foreign enemy, and at the same time obliged to serve as a citizen; and that compelling captives to bear arms against their families, kindred, friends and country, and, after being plundered themselves, to become accomplices in plundering their brethren, was unexampled, except among pirates, the outlaws and enemies of human society." To all these high charges the ministry replied, "that the measure was an act of grace and favour; for," said they, "the crews of American vessels, instead of being put to death, the legal punishment of their demerits, as traitors and rebels, are by this law to be rated on the king's books, and treated as if they were on the same footing with a great body of his most useful and faithful subjects." It was also said, "that their pay and emoluments, in the service of their lawful sovereign, would be a compensation for all scruples that might arise from the supposed violation of their principles."

In the progress of the debates on this bill, lord Mansfield declared, "that the questions of original right and wrong were no longer to be considered; that they were engaged in a war, and must use their utmost efforts to obtain the ends proposed by it; that they must either fight or be pursued; and that the justice of the cause must give way to their present situation." Perhaps no speech, in or out of parliament, operated more extensively on the irritated minds of the colonists than this one.

The great abilities and profound legal knowledge of lord Mansfield, were both known and admired in America. That this illustrious oracle of law should declare from the seat of legislation, "that the justice of the cause was no longer to be regarded," excited the astonishment, and cemented the union of the colonists. A number of lords, as usual, entered a spirited protest against the bill; but it was carried by a great majority in both houses of parliament, and Dec. 21, 1775, received the royal assent.

This law arrived in the colonies in March, 1776. The effects resulting from it were such as had been predicted by its opposers. It not only united the colonies in resisting Great Britain, but produced a favourable opinion of independence in the minds of thousands, who previously reprobated that measure. It was considered from New Hampshire to Georgia, as a legal discharge from allegiance to their native sovereign. What was wanting to produce a decided majority of the party for breaking off all connexion with Great Britain, was speedily obtained from the irritation excited, by the hiring of foreign troops to fight against the colonists. This measure was nearly coincident with the ratification of the prohibitory law just mentioned; and intelligence of both arrived in the colonies about the same time.

The treaties, which had been lately concluded with the landgrave of Hesse Cassel, the duke of Brunswick, and the hereditary prince of Hesse Cassel, for hiring their troops to the king of Great Britain, to be employed in the American service, being laid before the house of commons, a motion was made thereon for referring them to the committee of supply. This occasioned a very interesting debate, on the propriety of employing foreign troops against the Americans. The measure was supported on the necessity of prosecuting the war, and the impracticability of raising a sufficient number of domestic levies. It was also urged, "that foreign troops, inspired with the military maxims, and ideas of implicit submission, would be less apt to be biassed by that false lenity, which native soldiers might indulge, at the expense of national interest." It was said: "are we to sit still and suffer an un-

provoked rebellion to terminate in the formation of an independent hostile empire?" "Are we to suffer our colonies, the object of the great national expense, and of two bloody wars, to be lost forever to us; and given away to strangers, from a scruple of employing foreign troops to preserve our just rights, over colonies for which we have paid so dear a purchase? As the Americans, by refusing the obedience and taxes of subjects, deny themselves to be a part of the British empire, and make themselves foreigners, they cannot complain that foreigners are employed against them." On the other side, the measure was severely condemned. The necessity of the war was denied, and the nation was represented as disgraced by applying to the petty princes of Germany, for succours against her own rebellious subjects. The tendency of the example, to induce the Americans to form alliances with foreign powers, was strongly urged. It was said, "hitherto the colonists have ventured to commit themselves singly in this arduous contest, without having recourse to foreign aid; but it is not to be doubted, that in future they will think themselves fully justified, both by our example, and the laws of self-preservation, to engage foreigners to assist them in opposing those mercenaries, whom we are about to transport for their destruction. Nor is it doubtful, that in case of their application, European powers of a rank far superior to that of those petty princes to whom we have so abjectly sued for aid, will consider themselves to be equally entitled to interfere in the quarrel between us and our colonies."

The supposition of the Americans receiving aid from France or Spain, was, on this and several other occasions, ridiculed, on the idea that these powers would not dare to set to their own colonies the dangerous example of encouraging those of Great Britain, in opposing their sovereign. It was also supposed, that they would be influenced by considerations of future danger to their American possessions, from the establishment of an independent empire in their vicinity.

In this session of parliament, between the 26th of October, 1775, and the 23d of May, 1776, the ultimate plan for reduc-

ing the colonies was completely fixed. The Americans were declared out of the royal protection; and 16,000 foreign mercenaries employed by national authority, to effect their subjugation. These measures induced congress, in the following summer, to declare themselves independent, and to seek for foreign aid: events which shall be hereafter more fully explained.

Parliamentary sanction, for carrying on the war against the colonists, as against alien enemies, being obtained, it became necessary to fix on a commander of the royal forces to be employed on this occasion. This, as a matter of right, was, in the first instance, offered to general Oglethorpe, the founder of Georgia; as being the first on the list of general officers. To the surprise of the minister, that respectable veteran readily accepted the command, on condition of his being properly supported. A numerous, well-appointed army, and a powerful fleet were promised him; to which he replied: "I will undertake the business without a man, or a ship of war, provided you will authorise me to assure the colonists on my arrival among them, that you will do them justice." He added further: "I know the people of America well, and am satisfied, that his majesty has not in any part of his dominions, more obedient, or more loyal subjects. You may secure their obedience by doing them justice: but you will never subdue them by force of arms."\* These opinions, so favourable to the Americans, proved general Oglethorpe to be an improper person for the purpose intended by the British ministry. He was therefore passed over, and the command given to sir William Howe.

It was resolved to open the campaign, with such a powerful force, as "would look down all opposition, and effectuate submission without bloodshed;" and to direct its operations to the accomplishment of three objects. The first was the relief of Quebec, and the recovery of Canada; which also included a subsequent invasion of the north-western frontiers

\* This anecdote was communicated to the author by Henry Laurens, Esq. who received it from general Oglethorpe.



of the adjacent provinces. The second was, a strong impression on some of the southern colonies. The third and principal, was to take possession of New York, with a force sufficiently powerful to keep possession of Hudson's river, and form a line of communication with the royal army in Canada, or to overrun the adjacent country.

The partial success of the first part of this plan, has been in the preceding chapter explained. The execution of the second part was committed to general Clinton, and sir Peter Parker. The former, with a small force, having called at New York, and also visited in Virginia lord Dunmore, the late royal governor of that colony, and finding that nothing could be done at either place, proceeded to Cape Fear river. At that place, he issued a proclamation from on board the *Pallas* transport, offering free pardon to all such as should lay down their arms, excepting Cornelius Harnett, and Robert Howe: but the recent defeat of the regulators and Highlanders, restrained even their friends from paying any attention to this act of grace.

At Cape Fear, a junction was formed between sir Henry Clinton and sir Peter Parker; the latter of whom had sailed with his squadron directly from Europe. They concluded to attempt the reduction of Charleston, as being, of all places within the line of their instructions, the object at which they could strike, with the greatest prospect of advantage. They had 2,800 land forces, which, they hoped, with the co-operation of their shipping, would be fully sufficient.

For some months past, every exertion had been made to put the colony of South Carolina, and especially its capital, Charleston, in a respectable posture of defence. In subserviency to this view, works had been erected on Sullivan's island, which is situated so near the channel leading up to the town, as to be a convenient post for annoying vessels approaching it.

On the 28th of June, 1776, sir Peter Parker attacked the fort on that island with two fifty gun ships, the *Bristol* and *Experiment*; four frigates, the *Active*, *Acteon*, *Solebay*, and *Syren*, each of 28 guns; the *Sphynx* of 20 guns, the

Friendship armed vessel of 22 guns; Ranger sloop and Thunder bomb, each of 8 guns. On the fort were mounted 26 cannon, 26, 18 and 9 pounders. The attack commenced between ten and eleven in the forenoon, and was continued for upwards of ten hours. The garrison, consisting of 375 regulars and a few militia, under the command of colonel Moultrie, made a most gallant defence. They fired deliberately; for the most part took aim, and seldom missed their object. The ships were torn almost to pieces; and the killed and wounded on board exceeded 200 men. The loss of the garrison was only ten men killed, and 22 wounded. The fort, being built of palmetto, was little damaged. The shot which struck it were ineffectually buried in its soft wood. General Clinton had, sometime before the engagement, landed with a number of troops on Long Island; and it was expected that he would have co-operated with sir Peter Parker, by crossing over the narrow passage, which divides the two islands, and attacking the fort in its unfinished rear: but the extreme danger, to which he must unavoidably have exposed his men, induced him to decline the perilous attempt. Colonel Thompson, with 7 or 800 men, was stationed at the east end of Sullivan's island, to oppose their crossing. No serious attempt was made to land, either from the fleet, or the detachment commanded by sir Henry Clinton. The firing ceased in the evening, and the ships slipped their cables. Before morning, they had retired about two miles from the island. Within a few days more, the troops re-embarked, and the whole sailed for New York. The thanks of congress were given to general Lee, who had been sent on by congress to take the command in Carolina; and also to colonels Moultrie and Thompson, for their good conduct on this memorable day. In compliment to the commanding officer, the fort was from that time called Fort Moultrie.

During this engagement, the inhabitants stood with arms in their hands, at their respective posts, prepared to receive the enemy wherever they might land; impressed with high ideas of British power and bravery, they were apprehensive that the fort would be either silenced or passed, and that

they should be called to immediate action. They were cantoned in the various landing places near Charleston, and their resolution was fixed to meet the invaders at the water's edge, and dispute every inch of ground, trusting the event to heaven.

By the repulse of this armament, the southern states obtained a respite from the calamities of war, for two years and a half. The defeat the British met with at Charleston, seemed in some measure to counterbalance the unfavourable impression, made by their subsequent successes, to the northward. Throughout the whole summer, and till the close of the year, congress had little else than the victory on Sullivan's island, to console them under the various evacuations, retreats, and defeats, to which, as shall hereafter be related, their armies were obliged to submit, in every other part of the union. The event of the expedition contributed greatly to establish the cause, which it was intended to overthrow. In opposition to the bold assertions of some, and the desponding fears of others, experience proved that America might effectually resist a British fleet and army. Those, who from interested motives, had abetted the royal government, ashamed of their opposition to the struggles of an infant people for their dearest rights, retired into obscurity.

The effects of this victory, in animating the Americans, were much greater than could be warranted, by the circumstances of the action. As it was the first attack made by the British navy, its unsuccessful issue inspired a confidence, which a more exact knowledge of military calculations would have corrected. The circumstance of its happening in the early part of the war, and in one of the weaker provinces, were happily instrumental in dispelling the gloom which overshadowed the minds of many of the colonists, on hearing of the powerful fleets and numerous armies which were coming against them.

The command of the force, which was designed to operate against New York in this campaign, was given to admiral lord Howe, and his brother sir William, officers who, as well from their personal characters, as the known bravery of their family, stood high in the confidence of the British

nation. To this service, was allotted a very powerful army, consisting of about 30,000 men. This force was far superior to any thing that America had hitherto seen. The troops were amply provided with artillery, military stores, and warlike materials of every kind; and were supported by a numerous fleet. The admiral and general, in addition to their military powers, were appointed commissioners for restoring peace to the colonies.

General Howe, having in vain waited two months at Halifax, for his brother, and the expected reinforcements from England, impatient of further delays, sailed from that harbour, with the force which he had previously commanded in Boston, and directing his course towards New York, arrived in the latter end of June, off Sandy-Hook. Admiral lord Howe, with part of the reinforcement from England, arrived at Halifax, soon after his brother's departure. Without dropping anchor, he followed, and joined him near Staten Island. The British general, on his approach, found every part of New York island, and the most exposed parts of Long Island, fortified and well defended by artillery. About fifty British transports anchored near Staten Island, which had not been so much the object of attention. The inhabitants thereof, either from fear, policy, or affection, expressed great joy on the arrival of the royal forces. General Howe was there met by Tryon, late governor of the province, and by several of the loyalists, who had taken refuge with him in an armed vessel. He was also joined by about sixty persons from New Jersey: and 200 of the inhabitants of Staten Island were embodied, as a royal militia. From these appearances, great hopes were indulged that as soon as the army was in a condition to penetrate into the country, and protect the loyalists, such numbers would flock to their standard as would facilitate the attainment of the objects of the campaign.

On the fourth day after the British transports appeared off Sandy Hook, congress, though fully informed of the numbers and appointments of the force about to be employed against the colonies, ratified their famous declaration of in-



dependence. This was publicly read to the American army, and received by them with unfeigned acclamations of joy. Though it was well known, that Great Britain had employed a force of 55,000 men, to war upon the new formed states, and that the continental army was not nearly equal to half that number, and only engaged for a few months, and that congress was without any assurance of foreign aid ; yet both the American officers and privates gave every evidence of their hearty approbation of the decree, which severed the colonies from Great Britain, and submitted to the decision of the sword, whether they should be free states or conquered provinces. "Now," said they, "we know the ground on which we stand. Now we are a nation. No more shall the opprobrious term of rebel, with any appearance of justice, be applied to us. Should the fortune of war throw us into the hands of our enemies, we may expect the treatment of prisoners, and not the punishment of rebels. The prize for which we contend is of such magnitude, that we may freely risk our lives to obtain it."

It had early occurred to general Washington, that the possession of New York would be with the British a favourite object. Its central situation and contiguity to the ocean, enabled them to carry, with facility, the war to any part of the sea coast. The possession of it was rendered still more valuable, by the ease with which it could be maintained. Surrounded on all sides by water, it was defensible by a small number of British ships, against adversaries whose whole navy consisted only of a few frigates. Hudson's river, being navigable for ships of the largest size to a great distance, afforded an opportunity of severing the eastern from the more southern states, and of preventing almost any communication between them.

From these well-known advantages, it was presumed by the Americans, that the British would make great exertions to effect the reduction of New York. General Lee, while the British were yet in possession of the capital of Massachusetts, had been detached from Cambridge, to put Long Island and New York into a posture of defence. As the departure of the British

from Boston became more certain, the probability of their instantly going to New York, increased the necessity of collecting a force for its safety. It had been therefore agreed in a council of war, that five regiments, together with a rifle battalion, should march without delay to New York; and that the states of New York and New Jersey should be requested to furnish, the former two thousand, and the latter one thousand men for its immediate defence. General Washington soon followed, and early in April fixed his head quarters in that city. A new distribution of the American army took place. Part was left in Massachusetts. Between two and three thousand were ordered to Canada: but the greater part rendezvoused at New York.

Experience had taught the Americans the difficulty of attacking an army, after it had effected a lodgment. They therefore made strenuous exertions to prevent the British from enjoying the advantages in New York, which had resulted from their having been permitted to land and fortify themselves in Boston. The sudden commencement of hostilities in Massachusetts, together with the previous undisturbed landing of the royal army, allowed no time for deliberating on a system of war. A change of circumstances indicated the propriety of fixing on a plan, for conducting the defence of the new formed states. On this occasion, general Washington, after much thought, determined on a war of posts. This mode of conducting military operations gave confidence to the Americans, and it both retarded and alarmed their adversaries. The soldiers in the American army were new levies, and had not yet learned to stand uncovered before the instruments of death. Habituating them to the sound of fire arms, while they were sheltered from danger, was one step towards inspiring them with a portion of mechanical courage. The British remembered Bunker's-hill, and had no small reverence for even slight fortifications, when defended by freemen. With views of this kind, works were erected in and about New York, on Long Island, and the heights of Haerlem. These, besides batteries, were field redoubts, formed of earth, with a parapet and ditch. The former were

sometimes fraised, and the latter palisadoed; but they were in no instance formed to sustain a siege. Slight as they were, the campaign was nearly wasted away, before they were so far reduced, as to permit the royal army to penetrate into the country.

The war having taken a more important turn than in the preceding year had been foreseen, congress, at the opening of the campaign, found themselves destitute of a force sufficient for their defence. They, therefore, in June, determined on a plan to reinforce their continental army, by bringing into the field, a new species of troops, that would be more permanent than the common militia, and yet more easily raised than regulars. With this view they instituted a flying camp, to consist of an intermediate corps, between regular soldiers and militia. Ten thousand men were called for from the states of Pennsylvania, Maryland and Delaware, to be in constant service to the first day of the ensuing December. Congress at the same time called for 13,800 of the common militia from Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey. The men, for forming the flying camp, were generally procured: but there were great deficiencies of the militia: and many of those who obeyed their country's call, so far as to turn out, manifested a reluctance to submit to the necessary discipline of camps.

The difficulty of providing the troops with arms, while before Boston, was exceeded by the superior difficulty of supplying them, in their new position. By the returns of the garrison at fort Montgomery, in the highlands, in April, it appeared that there were 208 privates, and only 41 musquets fit for use. In the garrison at fort Constitution, there were 136 men, and only 68 musquets fit for use. Flints were also much wanted. Lead would have been equally deficient, had not a supply for the musquetry been obtained by stripping dwelling houses.

The uncertainty of the place, where the British would commence their operations, added much to the embarrassment of general Washington. Not only each colony, but each sea-port town, supposed itself to be the object of the

British, and was ardent in its supplications, to the commander in chief, for his peculiar attention. The people of Massachusetts were strongly impressed with an idea, that the evacuation of Boston was only a feint, and that the British army would soon return. They were for that reason very desirous, that the continental troops should not be withdrawn from their state. The inhabitants of Rhode Island urged in a long petition, that their maritime situation exposed them to uncommon danger, while their great exertions in fitting out armed vessels, had deprived them of many of their citizens. They therefore prayed for a body of continental soldiers, to be stationed for their constant and peculiar defence. So various were the applications for troops, so numerous the calls for arms, that a decided conduct became necessary to prevent the feeble American force, and the deficient stock of public arms, from being divided and subdivided, so as to be unequal to the proper defence of any one place.

In this crisis of particular danger, the people of New York acted with spirit. Though they knew they were to receive the first impression of the British army, yet their convention resolved, "that all persons, residing within the state of New York, and claiming protection from its laws, owed it allegiance; and that any person owing it allegiance, and levying war against the state, or being an adherent to the king of Great Britain, should be deemed guilty of treason, and suffer death." They also resolved, that one fourth of the militia of West Chester, Dutchess and Orange counties, should be forthwith drawn out for the defence of the liberties, property, wives and children of the good people of the state; to be continued in service, till the last day of December:" and, "that as the inhabitants of King's county, had determined not to oppose the enemy, a committee should be appointed to enquire into the authenticity of these reports, and to disarm and secure the disaffected; to remove or destroy the stock of grain, and, if necessary, to lay the whole country waste."

The two royal commissioners, admiral and general Howe, thought proper, before they commenced their military operations, to try what might be done in their civil capacity,



towards effecting a re-union between Great Britain and the colonies. It was one of the first acts of lord Howe, to send on shore a circular letter, to several of the royal governors in America, informing them of the late act of parliament, “for restoring peace to the colonies, and granting pardon to such as should deserve mercy;” and desiring them to publish a declaration which accompanied the same. In this, he informed the colonists of the power with which his brother and he were intrusted; “of granting general or particular pardons to all those, who, though they had deviated from their allegiance, were willing to return to their duty:” and of declaring, “any colony, province, county or town, port, district or place, to be at the peace of his majesty.”\* Congress, impressed with a

\* With these circular letters to the governors, lord Howe sent a private one to Dr. Franklin; to which a most interesting answer was returned, worthy of everlasting remembrance. The letter and answer were as follows:

*Lord Howe to Dr. Franklin.*

“I cannot, my worthy friend, permit the letters and parcels, which I have sent, to be landed, without adding a word upon the subject of the injurious extremities, in which our unhappy disputes have engaged us.

“You will learn the nature of my mission from the official despatches, which I have recommended to be forwarded by the same conveyance. Retaining all the earnestness I ever expressed, to see our differences accommodated, I shall conceive, if I meet with the disposition in the colonies, which I was once taught to expect, the most flattering hopes of proving serviceable in the objects of the king’s paternal solicitude, by promoting the establishment of lasting peace and union, with the colonies: but, if the deep-rooted prejudices of America, and the necessity of preventing her trade from passing into foreign channels, must keep us still a divided people, I shall, from every private as well as public motive, most heartily lament that this is not the moment wherein those great objects of my ambition are to be attained; and that I am to be longer deprived of an opportunity to assure you personally of the regard with which I am,” &c.

Dr. Franklin answered:—

“I received safe the letters your lordship so kindly forwarded to me, and beg you to accept my thanks.

“The official despatches, to which you refer me, contain nothing more than what we had seen in the act of Parliament; viz. “Offers of pardon upon submission;” which I am sorry to find, as it must give your lordship pain, to be sent so far on so hopeless a business.

“Directing pardons to be offered to the colonies, who are the very parties

belief, that the proposals of the commissioners, instead of disuniting the people, would have a contrary effect, ordered them to be speedily published in the several American newspapers. Had a redress of grievances been at this late hour offered, though the honour of the states was involved in supporting their late declaration of independence, yet the love of peace, and the bias of great numbers to their parent state,

injured, expresses indeed that opinion of our ignorance, baseness and insensibility, which your uninformed and proud nation has long been pleased to entertain of us; but it can have no other effect than that of increasing our resentments. It is impossible we should think of submission, to a government that has, with the most wanton barbarity and cruelty, burned our defenceless towns in the midst of winter; excited the savages to massacre our peaceful farmers, and our slaves to murder their masters; and is even now bringing foreign mercenaries to deluge our settlements with blood. These atrocious injuries have extinguished every spark of affection for that parent country, that we once held so dear; but were it possible for us to forget and forgive them, it is not possible for you, I mean the British nation, to forgive the people you have so heavily injured. You can never confide again in those, as fellow subjects, and permit them to enjoy equal freedom, to whom you know you have given such just causes of lasting enmity: and this must impel you, were we again under your government, to endeavour to break our spirit, by the severest tyranny, and obstructing, by every means in your power, our growing strength and prosperity.

“Your lordship mentions “the king’s paternal solicitude for promoting the establishment of lasting peace and union with the colonies.” If, by peace, be here meant a peace, to be entered into by distinct states, now at war, and his majesty have given your lordship powers to treat with us, of such a peace, I may venture to say, though without authority, that I think a treaty for that purpose not quite impracticable, before we enter into foreign alliances: but I am persuaded you have no such powers. Your nation, though by punishing those American governors, who have fomented the discord; rebuilding our burnt towns; and repairing, as far as possible, the mischiefs done us, she might recover a great share of our regard, and the greatest share of our growing commerce, with all the advantages of that additional strength to be derived from a friendship with us; yet, I know too well her abounding pride and deficient wisdom, to believe she will ever take such salutary measures. Her fondness for conquest, as a warlike nation; her lust of dominion, as an ambitious one; and her thirst for a gainful monopoly, as a commercial one, none of them legitimate causes of war, will join to hide from her eyes every view of her true interest, and continually goad her on, in these ruinous distant expeditions, so destructive both of lives and of treasure, that they must prove as pernicious to her in the end, as the croisades formerly were to most of the nations of Europe.

would, in all probability, have made a powerful party for rescinding the act of separation, and for re-uniting with Great Britain: but, when it appeared that the power of the royal commissioners was little more than to grant pardons, congress appealed to the good sense of the people, for the necessity of adhering to the act of independence. The resolution for publishing the circular letter, and the declaration of

“ I have not the vanity, my lord, to think of intimidating by thus predicting the effects of this war; for, I know that it will in England, have the fate of all my former predictions, not to be believed till the event shall verify it.

“ Long did I endeavour, with unfeigned and unwearied zeal, to preserve from breaking that fine and noble porcelain vase, the British empire; for, I knew, that being once broken, the separate parts could not retain even their share of the strength and value that existed in the whole, and that a perfect re-union of those parts could scarce ever be hoped for. Your lordship may possibly remember the tears of joy that wetted my cheek, when at your good sisters, in London, you once gave me expectations that a reconciliation might take place. I had the misfortune to find these expectations disappointed, and to be treated as the cause of the mischief I was labouring to prevent. My consolation, under that groundless and malevolent treatment, was that I retained the friendship of many wise and good men, in that country, and among the rest, some share in the regard of lord Howe.

“ The well-founded esteem, and permit me to say, affection, which I shall always have for your lordship, make it painful to me to see you engaged in conducting a war, the great ground of which, as described in your letter, is, “ the necessity of preventing the American trade from passing into foreign channels.” To me, it seems that neither the obtaining or retaining any trade, how valuable soever, is an object for which men may justly spill each other’s blood; that the true and sure means of extending and securing commerce are the goodness and cheapness of commodities; and that the profits of no trade can ever be equal to the expense of compelling it, and holding it by fleets and armies. I consider this war against us, therefore, as both unjust and unwise: and I am persuaded that cool and dispassionate posterity will condemn to infamy those who advised it; and that even success will not save from some degree of dishonour those who have voluntarily engaged to conduct it.

“ I know your great motive in coming hither was the hope of being instrumental in a reconciliation; and, I believe, when you find that to be impossible, on any terms given you to propose, you will then relinquish so odious a command, and return to a more honourable private station.

“ With the greatest and most sincere respect, I have the honour to be,” &c.

the royal commissioners, assigned as a reason thereof, "that the good people of the United States may be informed of what nature are the commissioners, and what the terms, with expectation of which the insidious court of Great Britain had endeavoured to amuse and disarm them; and that the few who still remain suspended by a hope, founded either in the justice or moderation of their late king, may now at length be convinced, that the valour alone of their country is to save its liberties."

About the same time, flags were sent ashore by lord Howe, with a letter directed to George Washington, Esq. which he refused to receive, as not being addressed to him, with the title due to his rank. In his letter to congress, on this subject, he wrote as follows: "I would not, on any occasion, sacrifice essentials to punctilio: but, in this instance, I deemed it a duty to my country and appointment, to insist on that respect, which, in any other than a public view, I would willingly have waived." Congress applauded his conduct in a public resolution, and at the same time directed that no letter or message should be received, on any occasion whatever, from the enemy, by the commander in chief, or others the commanders of the American army, but such as were directed to them in the characters they severally sustained.

Some time after, adjutant general Patterson was sent to New York, by general Howe, with a letter addressed to George Washington, &c. &c. &c. On an interview with the adjutant general, Washington declared that he would decline receiving any letter directed to him as a private person, when it related to his public station. A long conference ensued, in which the adjutant general observed, that "the commissioners were armed with great powers, and would be very happy in effecting an accommodation." He received for answer, "that from what appeared, their powers were only to grant pardon; that they who had committed no fault, wanted no pardon." Soon after this interview, a letter from Howe, respecting prisoners, which was properly addressed to Washington, was received.



While the British, by their manifestos and declarations, were endeavouring to separate those who preferred a reconciliation with Great Britain, from those who were the friends of independence; congress, by a similar policy, was attempting to detach the foreigners, who had come with the royal troops, from the service of his Britannic majesty. Before hostilities had commenced, the following resolution was adopted and circulated among those on whom it was intended to operate: "Resolved, that these states will receive all such foreigners who shall leave the armies of his Britannic majesty in America, and shall choose to become members of any of these states; and they shall be protected in the free exercise of their respective religions, and be invested with the rights, privileges, and immunities of natives, as established by the laws of these states: and moreover, that this congress will provide for every such person, fifty acres of unappropriated lands, in some of these states, to be held by him and his heirs, as absolute property."

The numbers which were prepared to oppose the British, when they should disembark, made them for some time cautious of proceeding to their projected land operations: but the superiority of their navy enabled them to go by water, whithersoever they pleased.

A British forty gun ship, with some smaller vessels, sailed up North river, without receiving any damage of consequence, though fired upon from the batteries of New York, Paulus-Hook, Red-Bank, and Governor's Island. An attempt was made, with two fire ships, to destroy the British vessels in the North river: but without effecting any thing more than the burning of a tender. They were also attacked with row galleys, with little effect. After some time, the Phoenix and Rose men of war came down the river, and joined the fleet. Every effort of the Americans, from their batteries on land, as well as their exertions on the water, proved ineffectual. The British ships passed with less loss than was generally expected: but, nevertheless, the damage they received was such as deterred them from frequently repeating the experiment. In two or three instances, they as-

cended North river, and in one or two, East river: but those which sailed up the former, speedily returned; and by their return, a free communication was opened through the upper part of the state.

The American army, in and near New York, amounted to 17,225 men. These were mostly new troops, and were divided, in many small and unconnected posts, some of which were fifteen miles removed from others. The British force before New York was increasing, by frequent successive arrivals from Halifax, South Carolina, Florida, the West Indies and Europe: but so many unforeseen delays had taken place, that the month of August was far advanced, before they were in a condition to open the campaign.

When all things were ready, the British commanders resolved to make their first attempt on Long Island. This was preferred to New York, as it abounded with those supplies which their forces required.

The British landed without opposition, between two small towns, Utrecht and Gravesend. The American works protected a small peninsula, having Wallabout Bay to the left, and stretching over to Red Hook on the right; the East River being in their rear. General Sullivan, with a strong force, was encamped within these works at Brooklyn. From the east side of the narrows, runs a ridge of hills covered with thick wood, about five or six miles in length, which terminates near Jamaica. There were three passes through these hills; one near the narrows, a second on the Flatbush road, and a third on the Bedford road: and they are all defensible. The Americans had 800 men on each of these roads; and colonel Miles was placed with his battalion of riflemen, to guard the road from the south of the hills, to Jamaica, and to watch the motions of the British.

General de Heister, with his Hessians, took post at Flatbush, in the evening, August 26th, 1776. In the following night, the greater part of the British army, commanded by general Clinton, marched to gain the road leading round the easterly end of the hills to Jamaica, and to turn the left of the Americans. He arrived about two hours before day, with-

in half a mile of this road. One of his parties fell in with a patrol of American officers, and took them all prisoners, which prevented the early transmission of intelligence. Upon the first appearance of day, general Clinton advanced, and took possession of the heights over which the road passed. General Grant, with the left wing, advanced along the coast by the west road, near the narrows; but this was intended chiefly as a feint.

The guard which was stationed at this road, fled without making any resistance. A few of them were afterwards rallied, and lord Stirling advanced with 1500 men, and took possession of a hill, about two miles from the American camp, and in front of general Grant.

An attack was made very early in the morning, August 27, 1776, by the Hessians from Flatbush, under general de Heister, and by general Grant on the coast, and was well supported for a considerable time by both sides. The Americans, who opposed general de Heister, were first informed of the approach of general Clinton, who had come round on their left. They immediately began to retreat to their camp, but were intercepted by the right wing under general Clinton, who got into the rear of their left, and attacked them with his light infantry and dragoons, while returning to their lines. They were driven back till they were met by the Hessians. They were thus alternately chased and intercepted, between general de Heister and general Clinton. Some of their regiments nevertheless found their way to the camp. The Americans under lord Stirling, consisting of colonel Miles's two battalions, colonel Atlee's, colonel Smallwood's, and colonel Hache's regiments, who were engaged with general Grant, fought with great resolution for about six hours. They were uninformed of the movements made by general Clinton, till some of the troops under his command had traversed the whole extent of country in their rear. Their retreat was thus intercepted; but several, notwithstanding, broke through and got into the woods. Many threw themselves into the marsh, some were drowned, and others perished in the mud: a considerable number escaped to their lines.

The king's troops displayed great valour throughout the whole day. The variety of the ground occasioned a succession of small engagements, pursuits and slaughter, which lasted for many hours. British discipline in every instance, triumphed over the native valour of raw troops, who had never been in action, and whose officers were unacquainted with the stratagems of war.

The loss of the British and Hessians was about 450. The killed, wounded and prisoners of the Americans, including those who were drowned, or perished in the woods or mud, considerably exceeded a thousand. Among the prisoners of the latter were two of their general officers, Sullivan and lord Stirling; three colonels, 4 lieutenant colonels, 3 majors, 18 captains, 43 lieutenants, and 11 ensigns. Smallwood's regiment, the officers of which were of the best families in the state of Maryland, sustained a loss of 259 men. The British after their victory were so impetuous, that it was with difficulty they could be restrained from attacking the American lines.

In the time of, and subsequent to, the engagement, general Washington drew over to Long Island, the greatest part of his army. After he had collected his principal force there, it was his wish and hope, that sir William Howe would attempt to storm the works on the island. These, though insufficient to stand a regular siege, were strong enough to resist a coup de main. The remembrance of Bunker's-hill, and a desire to spare his men, restrained the British general from making an assault. On the contrary, he made demonstrations of proceeding by siege, and broke ground within three hundred yards to the left, at Putnam's redoubt. Though general Washington wished for an assault, yet being certain that his works would be untenable, when the British batteries should be fully opened, he called a council of war, to consult on the measures proper to be taken. It was then determined that the objects in view were in no degree proportioned to the dangers, to which, by a continuation on the island, they would be exposed. Conformably to this opinion, dispositions were made for an immediate retreat. This commenced soon after



it was dark, from two points, the upper and lower ferries on East river. General M'Dougal regulated the embarkation at one, and colonel Knox at the other. The intention of evacuating the island, had been so prudently concealed from the Americans, that they knew not whither they were going, but supposed to attack the enemy. The field artillery, tents, baggage, and about 9000 men, were conveyed to the city of New York, over East river, more than a mile wide, in less than 13 hours, and without the knowledge of the British, though not 600 yards distant. Providence, in a remarkable manner, favoured the retreat. For some time after the Americans began it, the state of the tide, and a strong north-east wind made it impossible for them to make use of their sail boats: and their whole number of row boats was insufficient for completing the business, in the course of the night: but about eleven o'clock, the wind died away, and soon after sprung up at south-east, and blew fresh, which rendered the sail boats of use, and at the same time made the passage from the island to the city, direct, easy and expeditious. Towards morning, an extreme thick fog came up, which hovered over Long Island; and, by concealing the Americans, enabled them to complete their retreat without interruption, though the day had begun to dawn some time before it was finished. By a mistake in the transmission of orders, the American lines were evacuated for about three quarters of an hour, before the last embarkation took place: but the British, though so near, that their working parties could be distinctly heard, being enveloped in the fog, knew nothing of the matter. The lines were repossessed, and held till six o'clock in the morning. When every thing except some heavy cannon was removed, general Mifflin, who commanded the rear guard, left the lines, and under the cover of the fog got off safe. In about half an hour, the fog cleared away, and the British entered the works which had been just relinquished. Had the wind not shifted, the half of the American army could not have crossed; and even as it was, if the fog had not concealed their rear, it must have been discovered, and could hardly have escaped. General Sullivan, who was taken prisoner on Long :

Island, was immediately sent on parole, with the following verbal message from lord Howe to congress: "that though he could not at present treat with them in that character, yet he was very desirous of having a conference with some of the members, whom he would consider as private gentlemen; that he, with his brother, the general, had full power to compromise the dispute between Great Britain and America, upon terms advantageous to both; that he wished a compact might be settled, at a time when no decisive blow was struck, and neither party could say it was compelled to enter into such agreement; that were they disposed to treat, many things which they had not yet asked, might and ought to be granted; and that if upon conference they found any probable ground of accommodation, the authority of congress would be afterwards acknowledged to render the treaty complete." Three days after this message was received, general Sullivan was requested to inform lord Howe: "that congress, being the representatives of the free and independent states of America, cannot with propriety send any of their members to confer with his lordship in their private characters; but that ever desirous of establishing peace on reasonable terms, they will send a committee of their body, to know whether he has any authority to treat with persons authorised by congress, for that purpose, on behalf of America, and what that authority is; and to hear such propositions as he shall think fit to make respecting the same." They elected Dr. Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge their committee, for this purpose. In a few days they met lord Howe, on Staten Island, and were received with great politeness. On their return they made a report of their conference, which they summed up by saying: "it did not appear to your committee that his lordship's commission contained any other authority than that expressed in the act of parliament; namely, that of granting pardons, with such exceptions as the commissioners shall think proper to make, and of declaring America, or any part of it, to be in the king's peace, on submission. For, as to the power of enquiring into the state of America, which his lordship mentioned to us, and of conferring and consulting

with any persons the commissioners might think proper, and representing the result of such conversation to the ministry, who, provided the colonies would subject themselves, after all, might, or might not, at their pleasure, make any alterations in the former instructions to governors, or propose in parliament, any amendment of the acts complained of; we apprehended any expectation, from the effect of such a power, would have been too uncertain and precarious, to be relied on by America, had she still continued in her state of dependence." Lord Howe had ended the conference on his part, by expressing his regard for America, and the extreme pain he would suffer in being obliged to distress those whom he so much regarded. Dr. Franklin thanked him for his regards, and assured him, that the Americans would shew their gratitude, by endeavouring to lessen as much as possible, all pain he might feel on their account, by exerting their utmost abilities, in taking good care of themselves.

The committee in every respect maintained the dignity of congress. Their conduct and sentiments were such as became their character. The friends to independence rejoiced that nothing resulted from this interview, that might disunite the people. Congress, trusting to the good sense of their countrymen, ordered the whole to be printed for their information. All the states would have then rejoiced at less beneficial terms than they obtained about seven years after: but Great Britain counted on the certainty of their absolute conquest, or unconditional submission. Her offers, therefore, comported so little with the feelings of America, that they neither caused demur nor disunion, among the new formed states.

The unsuccessful termination of the action on the 27th led to consequences more seriously alarming to the Americans, than the loss of their men. Their army was universally dispirited. The militia ran off by companies. Their example infected the regular regiments. The loose footing on which the militia came to camp, made it hazardous to exercise over them that discipline, without which, an army is a mob. To restrain one part of an army, while another claimed and ex-

exercised the right of doing as they pleased, was no less impracticable than absurd.

A council of war recommended to act on the defensive, and not to risk the army for the sake of New York. To retreat, subjected the commander in chief to reflections painful to bear, and yet impolitic to refute. To stand his ground, and, by suffering himself to be surrounded, to hazard the fate of America on one decisive engagement, was contrary to every rational plan of defending the wide extended states committed to his care. A middle line, between abandoning and defending, was therefore for a short time adopted. The public stores were removed to Dobbs's ferry, about 26 miles from New York. Twelve thousand men were ordered to the northern extremity of New York island, and 4,500 to remain for the defence of the city; while the remainder occupied the intermediate space, with orders, either to support the city or Kingsbridge, as exigencies might require. Before the British landed, it was impossible to tell what place would be first attacked. This made it necessary to erect works for the defence of a variety of places, as well as of New York. Though every thing was abandoned, when the crisis came that either the city must be relinquished, or the army risked for its defence; yet from the delays occasioned by the redoubts and other works, which had been erected on the idea of making the defence of the states a war of posts, a whole campaign was lost to the British, and saved to the Americans. The year began with hopes, that Great Britain would recede from her demands, and therefore every plan of defence was on a temporary system. The declaration of independence, which the violence of Great Britain forced the colonies to adopt in July, though neither foreseen nor intended at the commencement of the year, pointed out the necessity of organizing an army, on new terms, correspondent to the enlarged objects for which they had resolved to contend. Congress accordingly determined to raise 88 battalions, to serve during the war. Under these circumstances, to wear away the campaign, with as little misfortune as possible, and



thereby to gain time for raising a permanent army against the next year, was to the Americans a matter of the last importance. Though the commander in chief abandoned those works, which had engrossed much time and attention, yet the advantage resulting from the delays they occasioned, far overbalanced the expense incurred by their erection.

The same short-sighted politicians, who had before censured general Washington, for his cautious conduct, in not storming the British lines at Boston, renewed their clamours against him, for adopting this evacuating and retreating system. Supported by a consciousness of his own integrity, and by a full conviction that these measures were best calculated for securing the independence of America, he, for the good of his country, voluntarily subjected his fame to be overshadowed by a temporary cloud.

General Howe, having prepared every thing for a descent on New York island, began to land his men under cover of ships of war, between Kepp's bay and Turtle bay. A breast work had been erected in the vicinity, and a party stationed in it to oppose the British, in case of their attempting to land. But on the first appearance of danger, they ran off in confusion. The commander in chief came up, and in vain attempted to rally them. Though the British in sight did not exceed sixty, he could not, either by example, intreaty, or authority, prevail on a superior force to stand their ground, and face that inconsiderable number.

On the day after this shameful flight of part of the American army, a skirmish took place between two battalions of light infantry and Highlanders, commanded by brigadier Leslie, and some detachments from the American army, under the command of lieutenant colonel Knowlton, of Connecticut, and major Leitch, of Virginia. The colonel was killed, and the major badly wounded. Their men behaved with great bravery, and fairly beat their adversaries from the field. Most of these were the same men, who had disgraced themselves the day before, by running away. Struck with a sense of shame for their late misbehaviour, they had offered themselves as volunteers, and requested the commander in

chief to give them an opportunity to retrieve their honour. Their good conduct, at this second engagement, proved an antidote to the poison of their example on the preceding day. It demonstrated that the Americans only wanted resolution and good officers, to be on a footing with the British; and inspired them with hopes, that a little more experience would enable them to assume, not only the name and garb, but the spirit and firmness of soldiers.

The Americans, having evacuated the city of New York, a brigade of the British army marched into it. They had been only a few days in possession, when a dreadful fire broke out, and consumed about a thousand houses. Dry weather, and a brisk wind, spread the flames to such an extent, that, had it not been for great exertions of the troops and sailors, the whole city must have shared the same fate. After the Americans had evacuated New York, they retired to the north end of the island, on which that city is erected. In about four weeks, general Howe began to execute a plan for cutting off general Washington's communication with the eastern states, and enclosing him so as to compel a general engagement on the island. With this view, the greater part of the royal army passed through Hellgate, entered the sound, and landed on Frog's neck, in West-Chester county. Two days after they made this movement, general Lee arrived from his late successful command to the southward. He found that there was a prevailing disposition among the officers in the American army for remaining on New York island. A council of war was called, in which general Lee gave such convincing reasons for quitting it, that they resolved immediately to withdraw the bulk of the army. He also pressed the expediency of evacuating fort Washington; but in this he was opposed by general Greene, who argued that the possession of that post would divert a large body of the enemy, from joining their main force, and in conjunction with fort Lee, would be of great use in covering the transportation of provisions and stores up the North river, for the service of the American troops. He added further, that the garrison could be brought off at any time, by boats from the

Jersey side of the river. His opinion prevailed. Though the system of evacuating and retreating was in general adopted, an exception was made in favour of fort Washington, and 3000 men were assigned for its defence.

The royal army, after a halt of six days, at Frog's neck, advanced near to New-Rochelle. On their march they sustained a considerable loss by a party of Americans, whom general Lee posted behind a wall. After three days, general Howe moved the right and centre of his army, two miles to the northward of New Rochelle, on the road to the White Plains: there he received a large reinforcement.

General Washington, while retreating from New York island, was careful to make a front towards the British, from East Chester, almost to White Plains, in order to secure the march of those who were behind, and to defend the removal of the sick, the cannon and stores of his army. In this manner his troops made a line of small detached and intrenched camps, on the several heights and strong grounds from Valentine's hill, on the right, to the vicinity of the White Plains, on the left.

The royal army moved in two columns, and took a position with the Bronx in front; upon which the Americans assembled their main force at White Plains, behind intrenchments. A general action was hourly expected, and a considerable one took place, in which several hundreds fell. The Americans were commanded by general M'Dougal, and the British by general Leslie. While they were engaged, the American baggage was moved off, in full view of the British army. Soon after this, general Washington changed his front, his left wing stood fast, and his right fell back to some hills. In this position, which was an admirable one in a military point of view, he both desired and expected an action; but general Howe declined it, and drew off his forces towards Dobbs's ferry. The Americans afterwards retired to North Castle.

General Washington, with part of his army, crossed the North River, and took post in the neighbourhood of Fort

Lee. A force of about 7500 men was left at North Castle, under general Lee.

The Americans having retired, sir William Howe determined to improve the opportunity of their absence, for the reduction of Fort Washington. This, the only post the Americans then held on New York island, was under the command of colonel Magaw. The royal army made four attacks upon it. The first on the north side, was led on by general Kniphausen. The second on the east by general Mathews, supported by lord Cornwallis. The third was under the direction of lieutenant colonel Stirling: and the fourth was commanded by lord Percy. The troops under Kniphausen, when advancing to the fort, had to pass through a thick wood, which was occupied by colonel Rawling's regiment of riflemen, and suffered very much from their well-directed fire. During this attack, a body of the British light infantry advanced against a party of the Americans, who were annoying them from behind rocks and trees, and obliged them to disperse. Lord Percy carried an advance work on his side: and lieutenant colonel Stirling forced his way up a steep height, and took 170 prisoners. Their outworks being carried, the Americans left their lines, and crowded into the fort. Colonel Rahl, who led the right column of Kniphausen's attack, pushed forward, and lodged his column within a hundred yards of the fort, and was there soon joined by the left column: the garrison surrendered on terms of capitulation, by which the men were to be considered as prisoners of war, and the officers to keep their baggage and side arms. The number of prisoners amounted to 2700. The loss of the British, inclusive of killed and wounded, was about 1200. Shortly after Fort Washington had surrendered, lord Cornwallis, with a considerable force, passed over to attack Fort Lee, on the opposite Jersey shore.

The garrison was saved by an immediate evacuation, but at the expense of their artillery and stores. General Washington, about this time, retreated to Newark. Having abundant reason, from the posture of affairs, to count on the



necessity of a further retreat, he asked colonel Reed: "should we retreat to the back parts of Pennsylvania? will the Pennsylvanians support us?" The colonel replied, if the lower counties be subdued and give up, the back counties will do the same. The general replied: "we must retire to Augusta county, in Virginia. Numbers will be obliged to repair to us for safety: and we must try what we can do in carrying on a predatory war: and, if overpowered, we must cross the Allegany mountains."

While a tide of success was flowing in upon general Howe, he and his brother, as royal commissioners, issued a proclamation, in which they commanded "all persons assembled in arms against his majesty's government to disband; and all general or provincial congresses to desist from their treasonable actings, and to relinquish their usurped power." They also declared, "that every person who within sixty days should appear before the governor, lieutenant governor, or commander in chief of any of his majesty's colonies, or before the general or commanding officer of his majesty's forces, and claim the benefit of the proclamation; and testify his obedience to the laws, by subscribing a certain declaration, should obtain a full and free pardon of all treasons by him committed, and of all forfeitures and penalties for the same."

The term of time for which the American soldiers had engaged to serve, ended in November or December; with no other exception, than that of two companies of artillery, belonging to the state of New York, which were engaged for the war. The army had been organized at the close of the preceding year, on the fallacious idea, that an accommodation would take place within a twelvemonth. Even the flying camp, though instituted after the prospect of that event had vanished, was enlisted only till the first of December, from a presumption that the campaign would terminate by that time.

When it was expected that the conquerors would retire to winter quarters, they commenced a new plan of operations more alarming than all their previous conquests. The reduction of Fort Washington, the evacuation of Fort Lee, and the

diminution of the American army, by the departure of those whose time of service had expired, encouraged the British, notwithstanding the severity of the winter, and the badness of the roads, to pursue the remaining inconsiderable continental force, with the prospect of annihilating it. By this turn of affairs, the interior country was surprised into confusion, and found an enemy within its bowels, without a sufficient army to oppose it. To retreat was the only expedient left. This having commenced, lord Cornwallis followed, and was close in the rear of general Washington, as he retreated successively to Newark, to Brunswick, to Princeton, to Trenton, and to the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware. The pursuit was urged with so much rapidity, that the rear of the one army, pulling down bridges was often within sight, and shot off the van of the other, building them up.

This retreat into, and through New Jersey, was attended with almost every circumstance that could occasion embarrassment and depression of spirits. It commenced in a few days after the Americans had lost 2700 men in Fort Washington. In fourteen days after that event, the whole flying camp claimed their discharge. This was followed by the almost daily departure of others, whose engagements terminated nearly about the same time. A further disappointment happened to general Washington. Gates had been ordered by congress to send two regiments from Ticonderoga, to reinforce his army. Two Jersey regiments were put under the command of general St. Clair, and forwarded in obedience to this order: but the period for which they were enlisted was expired, and the moment they entered their own state, they went off to a man. A few officers, without a single private, of these two regiments, were all that general St. Clair brought to the aid of the retreating American army. The few, who remained with general Washington, were in a most forlorn condition. They consisted mostly of the troops which had garrisoned Fort Lee, and had been compelled to abandon that post so suddenly, that they commenced their retreat without tents or blankets, and without any utensils to

dress their provisions. In this situation they performed a march of about ninety miles, and had the address to prolong it to the space of nineteen days. As the retreating Americans marched through the country, scarcely one of the inhabitants joined them; while numbers were daily flocking to the royal army, to make their peace, and obtain protection. They saw on the one side a numerous, well-appointed, and full clad army, dazzling their eyes with the elegance of uniformity; on the other a few poor fellows, who from their shabby clothing were called ragamuffins, fleeing for their safety. Not only the common people changed sides in this gloomy state of public affairs; but some of the leading men in New Jersey and Pennsylvania adopted the same expedient. Among these Mr. Galloway, and the family of the Allens of Philadelphia, were most distinguished. The former, and one of the latter, had been members of congress. In this hour of adversity, they came within the British lines, and surrendered themselves to the conquerors, alleging in justification of their conduct, that though they had joined with their countrymen, in seeking for a redress of grievances in a constitutional way, they had never approved of the measures lately adopted, and were in particular, at all times, averse to independence.

On the day general Washington retreated over the Delaware, the British took possession of Rhode Island without any loss, and at the same time blocked up commodore Hopkins's squadron, and a number of privateers at Providence.

In this period, when the American army was relinquishing its general; the people giving up the cause; some of their leaders going over to the enemy; and the British commanders succeeding in every enterprize, general Lee was taken prisoner at Baskenridge, by lieutenant colonel Harcourt. This caused a depression of spirits among the Americans, far exceeding any real injury done to their essential interests. He had been repeatedly ordered to come forward with his division, and join general Washington; but these orders were not obeyed. This circumstance, and the dangerous crisis of public affairs, together with his being alone, at some distance from the troops which he commanded, begat suspicions that he

chose to fall into the hands of the British. Though these apprehensions were without foundation, they produced the same extensive mischief, as if they had been realities. The Americans had reposed extravagant confidence in his military talents, and experience of regular European war. Merely to have lost such an idol of the states, at any time, would have been distressful; but losing him under circumstances, which favoured an opinion that, despairing of the American cause, he chose to be taken prisoner, was to many an extinguishment of every hope.

By the advance of the British into New Jersey, the neighbourhood of Philadelphia became the seat of war. This prevented that undisturbed attention to public business which the deliberations of congress required. They therefore adjourned themselves to meet in eight days at Baltimore, resolving at the same time, "that general Washington should be possessed of full powers to order and direct all things, relative to the department, and the operations of war."

The activity of the British in the close of the campaign, seemed in some measure to compensate for their tardiness in the beginning of it.

Hitherto they had succeeded in every scheme. They marched up and down the Jersey side of the river Delaware, and through the country, without any molestation. All opposition to the re-establishment of royal government, seemed to be on the point of expiring. The Americans had thus far acted without system, or rather feebly executed what had been injudiciously adopted. Though the war was changed from its first ground, a redress of grievances to a struggle for sovereignty, yet some considerable time elapsed, before arrangements, conformable to this new system were adopted; and a much longer, before they were carried into execution.

With the year 1776, a retreating, half-naked army was to be dismissed, and the prospect of a new one was both distant and uncertain. The recently assumed independence of the states, was apparently on the verge of dissolution. It was supposed by many, that the record of their existence would



have been no more than, that “a fickle people, impatient of the restraints of regular government, had, in a fit of passion, abolished that of Great Britain, and established in its room, free constitutions of their own; but these new establishments, from want of wisdom in their rulers, or of spirit in their people, were no sooner formed than annihilated. The leading men, in their respective governments, and the principal members of congress, for by this name the insurgents distinguished their supreme council, were hanged, and their estates confiscated. Washington, the gallant leader of their military establishments, worthy of a better fate, deserted by his army, abandoned by his country, rushing on the thickest battalions of the foe, provoked a friendly British bayonet to deliver him from an ignominious death.”

To human wisdom it appeared probable, that such a paragraph would have closed some small section in the history of England, treating of the American troubles. There is in human affairs an ultimate point of elevation or depression, beyond which they neither grow better nor worse: but turn back in a contrary course.

In proportion as difficulties increased, congress redoubled their exertions to oppose them. They addressed the states in animated language, calculated to remove their despondency, renew their hopes, and confirm their resolutions.

They, at the same time, despatched gentlemen of character and influence, to excite the militia to take the field. General Mifflin was, on this occasion, particularly useful. He exerted his great abilities, in rousing his fellow citizens, by animated and affectionate addresses, to turn out in defence of their endangered liberties.

Congress also recommended to each of the United States, “to appoint a day of solemn fasting and humiliation, to implore of Almighty God the forgiveness of their many sins, and to beg the countenance and assistance of his providence, in the prosecution of the present just and necessary war.”

In the dangerous situation, to which every thing dear to the friends of independence was reduced, congress transferred

extraordinary powers to general Washington, by a resolution, expressed in the following words:

“ The unjust, but determined purpose of the British court, to enslave these free states, obvious through every delusive insinuation to the contrary, having placed things in such a situation that the very existence of civil liberty now depends on the right execution of military powers; and the vigorous, decisive conduct of these being impossible to distant, numerous, and deliberative bodies; this congress, having maturely considered the present crisis, and having perfect reliance on the wisdom, vigour, and uprightness of general Washington, do hereby—

“ Resolve, that general Washington shall be, and he is hereby vested with full, ample, and complete powers, to raise and collect together, in the most speedy and effectual manner, from any or all of these United States, sixteen battalions of infantry, in addition to those already voted by congress; to appoint officers for the said battalions of infantry; to raise, officer, and equip 3000 light horse, three regiments of artillery, a corps of engineers; and to establish their pay; to apply to any of the states for such aid of the militia as he shall judge necessary; to form such magazines of provisions, and in such places as he shall think proper; to displace and appoint all officers under the rank of brigadier general; and to fill up all vacancies in every other department in the American armies; to take, wherever he may be, whatever he may want, for the use of the army, if the inhabitants will not sell it, allowing a reasonable price for the same; to arrest and confine persons who refuse to take the continental currency, or are otherwise disaffected to the American cause; and return to the states, of which they are citizens, their names, and the nature of their offences, together with the witnesses to prove them: that the foregoing powers be vested in general Washington, for and during the term of six months, from the date hereof, unless sooner determined by congress.”

In this hour of extremity, the attention of congress was

employed, in devising plans to save the states from sinking under the heavy calamities which were bearing them down. It is remarkable, that, neither in the present condition, though trying and severe, nor in any other since the declaration of independence, was congress influenced either by force, distress, artifice, or persuasion, to entertain the most distant idea of purchasing peace, by returning to the condition of British subjects. So low were they reduced in the latter end of 1776, that some members, distrustful of their ability to resist the power of Great Britain, proposed to authorise their commissioners at the court of France, (whose appointment shall be hereafter explained,) to transfer to that country the same monopoly of their trade, which Great Britain had hitherto enjoyed. On examination, it was found, that concessions of this kind would destroy the force of many arguments heretofore used in favour of independence, and probably disunite their citizens. It was next proposed to offer a monopoly of certain enumerated articles of produce. To this the variant interests of the different states were so directly opposed, as to occasion a speedy and decided negative. Some proposed offering to France, a league offensive and defensive, in case she would heartily support American independence: but this was also rejected. The more enlightened members of congress argued: "though the friendship of small states might be purchased, that of France could not." They alleged, that if she would risk a war with Great Britain, by openly espousing their cause, it would not be so much from the prospect of direct advantages, as from a natural desire to lessen the overgrown power of a dangerous rival. It was therefore supposed, that the only inducement, likely to influence France to an interference, was an assurance that the United States were determined to persevere in refusing a return to their former allegiance. Instead of listening to the terms of the royal commissioners, or to any founded on the idea of their resuming the character of British subjects, it was therefore again resolved, to abide by their declared independence, and proffered freedom of trade to every foreign nation; trusting the event to providence, and risk-

ing all consequences. Copies of these resolutions were sent to the principal courts of Europe, and proper persons were appointed to solicit their friendship to the new formed states. These despatches fell into the hands of the British, and were by them published. This was the very thing wished for by congress. They well knew that an apprehension of their making up all differences with Great Britain, was the principal objection to the interference of foreign courts, in what was represented to be no more than a domestic quarrel. A resolution, adopted in the deepest distress and the worst of times, that congress would listen to no terms of re-union with their parent state, convinced those who wished for the dismemberment of the British empire, that it was sound policy to interfere, so far as would prevent the conquest of the United States.

These judicious determinations in the cabinet, were accompanied with vigorous exertions in the field. In this crisis of danger, 1500 of the Pennsylvania militia embodied, to reinforce the continental army. The merchant, the farmer, the tradesman, and the labourer cheerfully relinquished the conveniences of home, to perform the duties of private soldiers, in the severity of a winter campaign. Though most of them were accustomed to the habits of a city life, they slept in tents, barns, and sometimes in the open air, during the cold months of December and January. There were, nevertheless, only two instances of sickness, and only one of death, in that large body of men, in the course of six weeks. The delay, so judiciously contrived on the retreat through Jersey, afforded time for these volunteer reinforcements to join general Washington. The number of troops under his command at that time, fluctuated between two and three thousand. To turn round and face a victorious and numerous foe, with this inconsiderable force, was risking much: but the urgency of the case required that something should be attempted. The recruiting business, for the proposed new continental army, was at a stand, while the British were driving the Americans before them. The present regular soldiers could, as a matter of right, in less than a week, claim their discharge, and



scarce a single recruit offered to supply their place. Under these circumstances, the bold resolution was formed, of re-crossing into the state of Jersey, and attacking that part of the enemy which was posted at Trenton.

When the Americans retreated over the Delaware, the boats in the vicinity were moved out of the way of their pursuers; this arrested their progress: but the British commanders, in the security of conquest, cantoned their army in Burlington, Bordenton, Trenton, and other towns of New Jersey, in daily expectation of being enabled to cross into Pennsylvania, by means of ice, which is generally formed about that time.

Of all events, none seemed to them more improbable, than that their late retreating, half-naked enemies, should, in this extreme cold season, face about and commence offensive operations. They indulged themselves in a degree of careless inattention to the possibility of a surprise, which, in the vicinity of an enemy, however contemptible, can never be justified. It has been said that colonel Rahl, the commanding officer in Trenton, being under some apprehension for that frontier post, applied to general Grant for a reinforcement, and that the general returned for answer: "Tell the colonel, he is very safe. I will undertake to keep the peace in New Jersey with a corporal's guard."

In the evening of Christmas day, general Washington made arrangements for re-crossing the Delaware in three divisions; at M'Konkey's ferry; at Trenton ferry; and at or near Bordenton. The troops which were to have crossed at the two last places, were commanded by generals Ewing and Cadwallader, who made every exertion to get over: but the quantity of ice was so great, that they could not effect their purpose. The main body which was commanded by general Washington, crossed at M'Konkey's ferry: but the ice in the river retarded its passage so long, that it was three o'clock in the morning, before the artillery could be gotten over. On landing in Jersey, it was formed into two divisions, commanded by generals Sullivan and Greene, who had under their command brigadiers lord Stirling, Mercer and St.

Clair. One of the divisions was ordered to proceed on the lower, or river road, the other on the upper, or Pennington road. Colonel Stark, with some light troops, was also directed to advance near to the river, and to possess himself of that part of the town which is beyond the bridge. The divisions having nearly the same distance to march, were ordered, immediately on forcing the out guards, to push directly into Trenton, that they might charge the enemy before they had time to form. Though they marched different roads, yet they arrived at the enemy's advanced post, within three minutes of each other. The out guards of the Hessian troops at Trenton soon fell back; but kept up a constant retreating fire. Their main body, being hard pressed by the Americans, who had already got possession of half their artillery, attempted to file off by a road leading towards Princeton: but were checked by a body of troops thrown in their way. Finding themselves surrounded, they laid down their arms. The number which submitted was 23 officers and 886 men. Between 30 and 40 of the Hessians were killed and wounded. Colonel Rahl was among the former, and seven of his officers among the latter. Captain Washington, of the Virginia troops, and five or six of the Americans, were wounded. Two were killed, and two or three were frozen to death. The detachment in Trenton consisted of the regiments of Rahl, Losberg, and Kniphausen, amounting in the whole to about 1500 men, and a troop of British light horse. All these were killed or captured, except about 600, who escaped by the road leading to Bordenton.

The British had a strong battalion of light infantry at Princeton, and a force yet remaining near the Delaware, superior to the American army. General Washington, therefore, in the evening of the same day, thought it most prudent to re-cross into Pennsylvania, with his prisoners.

The effects of this successful enterprise were speedily felt in recruiting the American army. About 1400 regular soldiers, whose time of service was on the point of expiring, agreed to serve six weeks longer, on a promised gratuity of ten paper dollars to each. Men of influence were sent to differ-

ent parts of the country to rouse the militia. The rapine and impolitic conduct of the British operated more forcibly on the inhabitants, to expel them from the state, than either patriotism or persuasion to prevent their overrunning it.

The Hessian prisoners taken on the 26th being secured, general Washington re-crossed the Delaware, and took possession of Trenton. The detachments, which had been distributed over New Jersey, previous to the capture of the Hessians, immediately after that event, assembled at Princeton, and were joined by the army from Brunswick, under lord Cornwallis. From this position, Jan. 2d, they proceeded towards Trenton in great force, hoping by a 1777 vigorous onset to repair the injury their cause had sustained by the late defeat. Truly delicate was the situation of the feeble American army. To retreat was to hazard the city of Philadelphia, and to destroy every ray of hope which had begun to dawn from their late success. To risk an action, with a superior force in front, and a river in rear, was dangerous in the extreme. To get round the advanced party of the British, and, by pushing forwards, to attack in their rear, was deemed preferable to either. The British, on their advance from Princeton, about 4 P. M. attacked a body of Americans posted with four field pieces, a little to the northward of Trenton, and compelled them to retreat. The pursuing British, being checked, at the bridge over Sanpink creek, which runs through that town, by some field pieces, posted on the opposite banks of that rivulet, fell back so far as to be out of reach of the cannon, and kindled their fires. The Americans were drawn up on the other side of the creek, and in that position remained till night, cannonading the enemy and receiving their fire. In this critical hour, two armies, on which the success or failure of the American revolution materially depended, were crowded into the small village of Trenton, and only separated by a creek in many places fordable. The British, believing they had all the advantages they could wish for, and that they could use them when they pleased, discontinued all further operations, and kept themselves in readiness to make the attack next morn-

ing. Sir William Erskine is reported to have advised an immediate attack, or at least to place a strong guard at a bridge over Sanpink creek, which lay in the route the Americans took to Princeton; giving for a reason that, otherwise, Washington, if a good general, would make a move to the left of the royal army, and attack the post at Princeton in their rear. The next morning presented a scene as brilliant on the one side, as it was unexpected on the other. Soon after it became dark, general Washington ordered all his baggage to be silently removed, and having left guards for the purpose of deception, marched with his whole force, by a circuitous route, to Princeton. This manœuvre was determined upon in a council of war, from a conviction that it would avoid the appearance of a retreat, and at the same time the hazard of an action in a bad position; and that it was the most likely way to preserve the city of Philadelphia, from falling into the hands of the British. General Washington also presumed, that from an eagerness to efface the impressions, made by the late capture of the Hessians at Trenton, the British commanders had pushed forward their principal force, and that of course the remainder in the rear at Princeton was not more than equal to his own. The event verified this conjecture. The more effectually to disguise the departure of the Americans from Trenton, fires were lighted up in front of their camp. These not only gave an appearance of going to rest, but, as flame cannot be seen through, concealed from the British what was transacting behind them. In this relative position they were a pillar of fire to the one army, and a pillar of a cloud to the other. Providence favoured this movement of the Americans. The weather had been for some time so warm and moist, that the ground was soft, and the roads so deep as to be scarcely passable: but the wind suddenly changed to the north-west, and the ground in a short time was frozen so hard, that, when the Americans took up their line of march, they were no more retarded, than if they had been upon a solid pavement.

General Washington reached Princeton, early in the morning, January 3, and would have completely surprised the



British, had not a party, which was on their way to Trenton, descried his troops, when they were about two miles distant, and sent back couriers to alarm their unsuspecting fellow soldiers in their rear. These consisted of the 17th, the 40th, and 55th regiments of British infantry, some of the royal artillery with two field pieces, and three troops of light dragoons. The centre of the Americans, consisting of the Philadelphia militia, while on their line of march, was briskly charged by a party of the British, and gave way in disorder. The moment was critical. General Washington pushed forward, and placed himself between his own men and the British; with his horse's head fronting the latter. The Americans, encouraged by his example and exhortations, made a stand, and returned the British fire. The general, though between both parties, was providentially uninjured by either. A party of the British fled into the college, and were there attacked with field pieces which were fired into it. The seat of the muses became for some time the scene of action. The party, which had taken refuge in the college, after receiving a few discharges from the American field pieces, came out and surrendered themselves prisoners of war. In the course of the engagement, sixty of the British were killed, a greater number wounded, and about 500 of them taken prisoners. The rest made their escape, some by pushing on towards Trenton, others by returning towards Brunswick. The Americans lost only a few: but colonels Haslet and Potter, and captain Neal of the artillery, were among the slain. General Mercer received three bayonet wounds, of which he died in a short time. He was a Scotchman by birth; but from principle and affection had engaged to support the liberties of his adopted country, with a zeal equal to that of any of its native sons. In private life he was amiable, and his character as an officer stood high in the public esteem.

While they were fighting in Princeton, the British in Trenton were under arms, and on the point of making an assault on the evacuated camp of the Americans. With so much address had the movement to Princeton been conducted, that though, from the critical situation of the two armies,

every ear may be supposed to have been open, and every watchfulness to have been employed, yet general Washington moved completely off the ground, with his whole force, stores, baggage, and artillery, unknown to, and unsuspected by his adversaries. The British in Trenton, were so entirely deceived, that when they heard the report of the artillery at Princeton, though it was in the depth of winter, they supposed it to be thunder.

That part of the royal army, which, having escaped from Princeton, retreated towards New Brunswick, was pursued for three or four miles. Another party which had advanced as far as Maidenhead, on their way to Trenton, hearing the frequent discharge of fire arms in their rear, wheeled round and marched to the aid of their companions. The Americans, by destroying bridges, retarded these, though close in their rear, so long as to gain time for themselves to move off, in good order, to Pluckemin.

So great was the consternation of the British at these unexpected movements, that they instantly evacuated both Trenton and Princeton, and retreated with their whole force to New Brunswick. The American militia collected, and, forming themselves into parties, waylaid their enemies, and cut them off whensoever an opportunity presented. In a few days they overran the Jerseys. General Maxwell surprised Elizabeth-town, and took near 100 prisoners. Newark was abandoned: and the late conquerors were forced to leave Woodbridge. The royal troops were confined to Amboy and Brunswick, which held a water communication with New York. Thus, in the short space of a month, that part of Jersey, which lies between New Brunswick and Delaware, was both overrun by the British, and recovered by the Americans. The retreat of the continental army, the timid policy of the Jersey farmers, who chose rather to secure their property by submission, than defend it by resistance, made the British believe their work was done, and that little else remained, but to reap a harvest of plunder as the reward of their labours. Unrestrained by the terrors of civil law, uncontrolled by the severity of discipline, and elated with their success, the sol-

diers of the royal army, and particularly the Hessians, gave full scope to the selfish and ferocious passions of human nature. A conquered country and submitting inhabitants presented easy plunder, equal to their unbounded rapacity. Infants, children, old men and women, were stripped of their blankets and cloathing. Furniture was burnt or otherwise destroyed. Domestic animals were carried off, and the people robbed of their necessary household provisions. The rapes and brutalities committed on women, and even on very young girls, would shock the ears of modesty if particularly recited. These violences were perpetrated on inhabitants who had remained in their houses, and received printed protections, signed by order of the commander in chief. It was in vain that they produced these protections as a safeguard. The Hessians could not read them: and the British soldiers thought they were entitled to a share of the booty, equally with their foreign associates.

Such, in all ages, has been the complexion of the bulk of armies, that immediate and severe punishments are indispensably necessary, to keep them from flagrant enormities. That discipline, without which an army is a band of armed plunderers, was, as far as respected the inhabitants, either neglected, or but feebly administered in the royal army. The soldiers, finding they might take with impunity what they pleased, were more strongly urged by avarice, than checked by policy or fear. Had every citizen been secured in his rights, protected in his property, and paid for his supplies, the consequences might have been fatal to the hopes of those who were attached to independence. What the warm recommendations of congress, and the ardent supplications of general Washington could not effect, took place of its own accord, in consequence of the plunderings and devastations of the royal army.

The whole country became instantly hostile to the invaders. Sufferers of all parties rose, as one man, to revenge their personal injuries. Those, who, from age or infirmities, were incapable of bearing arms, kept a strict watch on the movements of the royal army, and, from time to time, communi-

cated information to their countrymen in arms. Those who lately declined all military opposition, though called upon by the sacred tie of honour pledged to each other on the declaration of independence, cheerfully embodied, when they found submission to be unavailing for the security of their estates. This was not done originally in consequence of the victories of Trenton and Princeton. In the very moment of these actions, or before the news of them had circulated, sundry individuals, unknowing of general Washington's movements, were concerting private insurrections, to revenge themselves on the plunderers. The dispute originated about property, or in other words, about the right of taxation. From the same source, at this time, it received a new and forcible impulse. The farmer, who could not trace the consequences of British taxation, nor of American independence, felt the injuries he sustained from the depredation of licentious troops. The militia of New Jersey, who had hitherto behaved most shamefully, from this time forward redeemed their character, and, throughout a tedious war, performed services with a spirit and discipline, in many respects, equal to that of regular soldiers.

The victories of Trenton and Princeton seemed to be like a resurrection from the dead, to the desponding friends of independence. A melancholy gloom had, in the first 25 days of December, overspread the United States; but, from the memorable era of the 26th of the same month, their prospects began to brighten. The recruiting service, which for some time had been at a stand, was successfully renewed: and hopes were soon indulged, that the commander in chief would be enabled to take the field in the spring, with a permanent regular force. General Washington retired to Morristown, that he might afford shelter to his suffering army. The American militia had sundry successful skirmishes with detachments of their adversaries. Within four days after the affair at Princeton, between forty and fifty Waldeckers were killed, wounded, or taken at Springfield, by an equal number of the same New Jersey militia, which, but a month before, suffered the British to overrun their country without



opposition. This enterprise was conducted by colonel Spencer, whose gallantry, on the occasion, was rewarded with the command of a regiment.

During the winter movements, which have been just related, the soldiers of both armies underwent great hardships; but the Americans suffered by far the greatest. Many of them were without shoes, though marching over frozen ground, which so gashed their naked feet, that each step was marked with blood. There was scarcely a tent in the whole army. The city of Philadelphia had been twice laid under contribution, to provide them with blankets. Officers had been appointed to examine every house, and, after leaving a scanty covering for the family, to bring off the rest, for the use of the troops in the field; but, notwithstanding these exertions, the quantity procured was far short of decency, much less of comfort.

The officers and soldiers of the American army were about this time inoculated in their cantonment at Morristown. As very few of them had ever had the small pox, the inoculation was nearly universal. The disorder had previously spread among them in the natural way, and proved mortal to many: but after inoculation was introduced, though whole regiments were inoculated in a day, there was little or no mortality from the small pox; and the disorder was so slight, that, from the beginning to the end of it, there was not a single day in which they could not, and, if called upon, would not have turned out and fought the British. To induce the inhabitants to accommodate officers and soldiers in their houses, while under the small pox, they and their families were inoculated gratis by the military surgeons. Thus, in a short time, the whole army, and the inhabitants in and near Morristown were subjected to the small pox, and with very little inconvenience to either.

Three months, which followed the actions of Trenton and Princeton, passed away without any important military enterprise on either side. Major general Putnam was directed to take post at Princeton, and cover the country in the vicinity. He had only a few hundred troops, though he was no more

than eighteen miles distant from the strong garrison of the British at Brunswick. At one period he had fewer men for duty, than he had miles of frontier to guard. The situation of general Washington at Morristown was not more eligible. His force was trifling, when compared with that of the British; but the enemy, and his own countrymen, believed the contrary. Their deception was cherished, and artfully continued by the specious parade of a considerable army. The American officers took their station in positions of difficult access, and kept up a constant communication with each other. This secured them from insult and surprise. While they covered the country, they harassed the foraging parties of the British, and often attacked them with success. Of a variety of these, the two following are selected as most worthy of notice. General Dickenson, with four hundred Jersey militia, and fifty of the Pennsylvania riflemen, crossed Millstone-river, near Somerset court-house, and attacked a large foraging party of the British, with so much spirit, that they abandoned their convoy, and fled. Nine of them were taken prisoners. Forty waggons, and upwards of one hundred horses, with a considerable booty, fell into the hands of the general. While the British were loading their waggons, a single man began to fire on them from the woods. He was soon joined by more of his neighbours, who could not patiently see their property carried away. After the foragers had been annoyed for some time by these unseen marksmen, they fancied, on the appearance of general Dickenson, that they were attacked by a superior force, and began a precipitate flight.

In about a month after the affair of Somerset court-house, colonel Nelson, of Brunswick, with a detachment of 150 militia men, surprised and captured, at Lawrence's Neck, a major and fifty-nine privates of the refugees, who were in British pay.

Throughout the campaign of 1776, an uncommon degree of sickness raged in the American army. Husbandmen, transferred at once from the conveniencies of domestic life, to the hardships of a field encampment, could not accommo-

date themselves to the sudden change. The southern troops sickened from the want of salt provisions. Linen shirts were generally worn, in contact with the skin. The salutary influence of flannel, in preventing the diseases of camps, was either unknown or disregarded. The discipline of the army was too feeble to enforce those regulations which experience has proved to be indispensably necessary, for preserving the health of large bodies of men collected together. Cleanliness was also too much neglected. On the 8th of August, the whole American army before New York, consisted of 17,225 men; but of that number only 10,514 were fit for duty. The numerous sick suffered much from the want of necessaries. Hurry and confusion added much to their distresses. There was besides a real want of the requisites for their relief.

A proper hospital establishment was beyond the abilities of congress, especially as the previous arrangements were not entered upon till the campaign had begun. Many, perhaps some thousands, of the American army, were swept off in a few months by sickness. The country every where presented the melancholy sight of soldiers suffering poverty and disease, without the aid of medicine or attendance. Those who survived gave such accounts of the sufferings of the sick, as greatly discouraged the recruiting service. A rage for plundering, under the pretence of taking tory property, infected many of the common soldiery, and even some of the officers. The army had been formed on such principles, in some of the states, that commissions were, in several instances, bestowed on persons who had no pretensions to the character of gentlemen. Several of the officers were chosen by their own men; and they often preferred those from whom they expected the greatest indulgencies. In other cases, the choice of the men was in favour of those who had consented to throw their pay into a joint stock with the privates, from which officers and men drew equal shares.

The army, consisting mostly of new recruits and inexperienced officers, and being only engaged for a twelvemonth, was very deficient in that mechanism and discipline, which time and experience bestow on veteran troops. General

Washington was unremitting in his representations to congress, favouring such alterations as promised permanency, order, and discipline in the army: but his judicious opinions on these subjects were slowly adopted. The sentiments of liberty, which then generally prevailed, made some distinguished members of congress so distrustful of the future power and probable designs of a permanent domestic army, that they had well nigh sacrificed their country to their jealousies.

The unbounded freedom of the savage, who roams the woods, must be restrained, when he becomes a citizen of orderly government; and, from the necessity of the case, must be much more so, when he submits to be a soldier. The individuals, composing the army of America, could not at once pass over from the full enjoyment of civil liberty to the discipline of a camp, nor could the leading men in congress for some time be persuaded to adopt energetic establishments. "God forbid," would such say, "that the citizen should be so far lost in the soldiers of our army, that they should give over longing for the enjoyments of domestic happiness. Let frequent furloughs be granted, rather than the endearments of wives and children should cease to allure the individuals of our army from camps to farms." The amiableness of this principle veiled the error of the sentiment. The minds of the civil leaders in the councils of America were daily occupied, in contemplating the rights of human nature, and investigating arguments on the principles of general liberty, to justify their own opposition to Great Britain. Warmed with these ideas, they trusted too much to the virtue of their countrymen, and were backward to enforce that subordination and order in their army, which, though it intrenches on civil liberty, produces effects in the military line unequalled by the effusions of patriotism, or the exertions of undisciplined valour.

The experience of two campaigns evinced the folly of trusting the defence of the country to militia, or to levies raised only for a few months, and had induced a resolution for recruiting an army for the war. The good effects of this measure will appear in the sequel.



The campaign of 1776 did not end till it had been protracted into the first month of the year 1777. The British had counted on the complete and speedy reduction of their late colonies: but they found the work more difficult of execution, than was supposed. They wholly failed in their designs on the southern states. In Canada, they recovered what, in the preceding year, they had lost; drove the Americans out of their borders, and destroyed their fleet on the lakes: but they failed in making their intended impression on the north-western frontier of the states. They obtained possession of Rhode Island: but the acquisition was of little service; perhaps was of detriment. For nearly three years, several thousand men stationed thereon, for its security, were lost to every purpose of active co-operation with the royal forces in the field, and the possession of it secured no equivalent advantages. The British completely succeeded against the city of New York, and the adjacent country: but when they pursued their victories into New Jersey, and subdivided their army, the recoiling Americans soon recovered the greatest part of what they had lost.

Sir William Howe, after having nearly reached Philadelphia, was confined to limits so narrow, that the fee simple of all he commanded would not reimburse the expense incurred by its conquest.

The war, on the part of the Americans, was but barely begun. Hitherto they had engaged with temporary forces, for a redress of grievances: but towards the close of this year they made arrangements for raising a permanent army, to contend with Great Britain for the sovereignty of the country. To have thus far stood their ground, with their new levies, was a matter of great importance. To them delay was victory; and not to be conquered was to conquer.

## CHAPTER XII.

*Of Independence, State Constitutions, and the Confederation.*

IN former ages, it was common for a part of a community to migrate, and to erect themselves into an independent society. Since the earth has been more fully peopled, and especially since the principles of union have been better understood, a different policy has prevailed. A fondness for planting colonies has, for three preceding centuries, given full scope to a disposition for emigration; and, at the same time, the emigrants have been retained in a connection with their parent state. By these means Europeans have made the riches, both of the east and west, subservient to their avarice and ambition. Though they occupy the smallest portion of the four quarters of the globe, they have contrived to subject the other three to their influence or command.

The circumstances, under which New England was planted, would, a few centuries ago, have entitled them, from their first settlement, to the privileges of independence. They were virtually exiled from their native country, by being denied the rights of men; they set out on their own expense, and, after purchasing the consent of the native proprietors, improved an uncultivated country, to which, in the eye of reason and philosophy, the king of England had no title.

If it be lawful for individuals to relinquish their native soil, and pursue their own happiness in other regions, and under other political associations, the settlers of New England were always so far independent, as to owe no obedience to their parent state, but such as resulted from their voluntary assent. The slavish doctrine of the divine right of kings, and the corruptions of christianity, by undervaluing heathen titles, favoured an opposite system. What, for several centuries after the christian era, would have been called the institution of a new government, was by modern refinement denominated only an extension of the old, in the form of a de-

pendent colony. Though the prevailing ecclesiastical and political creeds tended to degrade the condition of the settlers of New England, yet there was always a party there which believed in their natural right to independence. They recurred to first principles, and argued, that, as they received from government nothing more than a charter, founded on ideal claims of sovereignty, they owed it no other obedience than what was derived from express, or implied compact. It was not till the 18th century had more than half elapsed, that it occurred to any member of the colonists, that they had an interest in being detached from Great Britain. Their attention was first turned to this subject, by the British claim of taxation. This opened a melancholy prospect, boundless in extent, and endless in duration. The Boston port act, and the other acts, passed in 1774, and 1775, which have been already the subject of comment, progressively weakened the attachment of the colonists, to the birth place of their forefathers. The commencement of hostilities on the 19th of April, 1775, exhibited the parent state in an odious point of view, and abated the original dread of separating from it. But nevertheless, at that time, and for a twelvemonth after, a majority of the colonists wished for no more than to be re-established as subjects, in their ancient rights. Had independence been their object, even at the commencement of hostilities, they would have rescinded the associations, which have been already mentioned, and imported more largely than ever. Common sense revolts at the idea, that colonists, unfurnished with military stores, and wanting manufactures of every kind, should, at the time of their intending a serious struggle for independence, by a voluntary agreement, deprive themselves of the obvious means of procuring such foreign supplies as their circumstances might make necessary. Instead of pursuing a line of conduct, which might have been dictated by a wish for independence, they continued their exports for nearly a year after they ceased to import. This not only lessened the debts they owed to Great Britain, but furnished additional means for carrying on the war against themselves. To aim at independence, and at the same time to transfer

their resources to their enemies, could not have been the policy of an enlightened people. It was not till some time in 1776, that the colonists began to take other ground, and contend that it was for their interest to be forever separated from Great Britain. In favour of this opinion, it was said, that, in case of their continuing subjects, the mother country, though she redressed their grievances, might at pleasure repeat similar oppressions; that she ought not to be trusted, having twice resumed the exercise of taxation, after it had been apparently relinquished. The favourers of separation also urged, that Great Britain was jealous of their increasing numbers, and rising greatness; that she would not exercise government for their benefit, but for her own. That the only permanent security for American happiness was, to deny her the power of interfering with their government or commerce. To effect this purpose, they were of opinion, that it was necessary to cut the knot, which connected the two countries, by a public renunciation of all political connections between them.

The Americans about this time began to be influenced by new views. The military arrangements of the preceding year; their unexpected union, and prevailing enthusiasm, expanded the minds of their leaders, and elevated the sentiments of the people. Decisive measures, which would have been lately reprobated, now met with approbation.

The favourers of subordination under the former constitution urged the advantages of a supreme head, to control the disputes of interfering colonies, and also the benefits which flowed from union; that independence was untried ground, and should not be entered upon, but in the last extremity.

They flattered themselves that Great Britain was so fully convinced of the determined spirit of America, that if the present controversy were compromised, she would not, at any future period, resume an injurious exercise of her supremacy. They were therefore for proceeding no further than to defend themselves in the character of subjects, trusting that ere long the present hostile measures would be relinquished, and the harmony of the two countries re-established. The



favourers of this system were embarrassed, and all their arguments weakened, by the perseverance of Great Britain in her schemes of coercion. A probable hope of a speedy repeal of a few acts of parliament would have greatly increased the number of those who were advocates for reconciliation : but the certainty of intelligence to the contrary gave additional force to the arguments of the opposite party. Though new weight was daily thrown into the scale, in which the advantages of independence were weighed, yet it did not preponderate till about that time in 1776, when intelligence reached the colonists of the act of parliament passed in December, 1775, for throwing them out of British protection, and of hiring foreign troops to assist in effecting their conquest. Respecting the first it was said, “that protection and allegiance were reciprocal, and that the refusal of the first was a legal ground of justification for withholding the last.” They considered themselves to be thereby discharged from their allegiance, and that to declare themselves independent, was no more than to announce to the world the real political state in which Great Britain had placed them. This act proved that the colonists might constitutionally declare themselves independent; but the hiring of foreign troops to make war upon them, demonstrated the necessity of their doing it immediately. They reasoned that if Great Britain called in the aid of strangers to crush them, they must seek similar relief for their own preservation. They well knew this could not be expected, while they were in arms against their acknowledged sovereign. They had therefore only a choice of difficulties, and must either seek foreign aid as independent states, or continue in the awkward and hazardous situation of subjects, carrying on war from their own resources, both against their king, and such mercenaries as he chose to employ for their subjugation. Necessity, not choice, forced them on the decision. Submission without obtaining a redress of their grievances was advocated by none who possessed the public confidence. Some of the popular leaders may have secretly wished for independence from the beginning

of the controversy; but their number was small, and their sentiments were not generally known.

While the public mind was balancing on this eventful subject, several writers placed the advantages of independence in various points of view. Among these, Thomas Paine, in a pamphlet under the signature of Common Sense, held the most distinguished rank. The stile, manner, and language of this performance were calculated to interest the passions, and to rouse all the active powers of human nature. With the view of operating on the sentiments of a religious people, scripture was pressed into his service; and the powers, and even the name of a king, were rendered odious in the eyes of the numerous colonists, who had read and studied the history of the Jews, as recorded in the Old Testament. The folly of that people in revolting from a government, instituted by heaven itself, and the oppressions to which they were subjected in consequence of their lusting after kings to rule over them, afforded an excellent handle for prepossessing the colonists in favour of republican institutions, and prejudicing them against kingly government. Hereditary succession was turned into ridicule. The absurdity of subjecting a great continent to a small island, on the other side of the globe, was represented in such striking language, as to interest the honour and pride of the colonists, in renouncing the government of Great Britain. The necessity, the advantages, and practicability of independence were forcibly demonstrated. Nothing could be better timed than this performance. It was addressed to freemen, who had just received convincing proof, that Great Britain had thrown them out of her protection, had engaged foreign mercenaries to make war upon them, and seriously designed to compel their unconditional submission to her unlimited power. It found the colonists most thoroughly alarmed for their liberties, and disposed to do and suffer any thing that promised their establishment. In union with the feelings and sentiments of the people, it produced surprising effects. Many thousands were convinced, and were led to approve and long for a separation from the mother

country. Though that measure, a few months before, was not only foreign from their wishes, but the object of their abhorrence, the current suddenly became so strong in its favour, that it bore down all opposition. The multitude was hurried down the stream; but some worthy men could not easily reconcile themselves to the idea of an eternal separation from a country, to which they had long been bound by the most endearing ties. They saw the sword drawn; but could not tell when it would be sheathed. They feared that the dispersed individuals of the several colonies would not be brought to coalesce under an efficient government, and that after much anarchy some future Cæsar would grasp their liberties, and confirm himself in a throne of despotism. They doubted the perseverance of their countrymen in effecting their independence, and were also apprehensive that, in case of success, their future condition would be less happy than their past. Some respectable individuals, whose principles were pure, but whose souls were not of that firm texture which revolutions require, shrunk back from the bold measures proposed by their more adventurous countrymen. To submit without an appeal to heaven, though secretly wished for by some, was not the avowed sentiment of any: but to persevere in petitioning and resisting was the system of some misguided, honest men. The favourers of this opinion were generally wanting in that decision which grasps at great objects, and influenced by that timid policy, which does its work by halves. Most of them dreaded the power of Britain. A few, on the score of interest or an expectancy of favours from royal government, refused to concur with the general voice. Some of the natives of the parent state, who, having lately settled in the colonies, had not yet exchanged European for American ideas, together with a few others, conscientiously opposed the measures of congress: but the great bulk of the people, and especially of the spirited and independent part of the community, came with surprising unanimity into the project of independence.

The eagerness for independence resulted more from feeling than reasoning. The advantages of an unfettered trade,

the prospect of honours and emoluments in administering a new government, were of themselves insufficient motives for adopting this bold measure. But, what was wanting from considerations of this kind, was made up by the perseverance of Great Britain, in her schemes of coercion and conquest. The determined resolution of the mother country to subdue the colonists, together with the plans she adopted for accomplishing that purpose, and their equally determined resolution to appeal to heaven rather than submit, made a declaration of independence as necessary in 1776, as was the non-importation agreement of 1774, or the assumption of arms in 1775. The last naturally resulted from the first. The revolution was not forced on the people by ambitious leaders grasping at supreme power; but every measure of it was forced on congress, by the necessity of the case, and the voice of the people. The change of the public mind of America, respecting connexion with Great Britain, is without a parallel. In the short space of two years, nearly three millions of people passed over from the love and duty of loyal subjects, to the hatred and resentment of enemies.

The motion for declaring the colonies free and independent, was first made in congress, June 7, 1776, by Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia. He was warranted in making this motion by the particular instructions of his immediate constituents, and also by the general voice of the people of all the states. When the time for taking the subject under consideration arrived, much knowledge, ingenuity and eloquence were displayed on both sides of the question. The debates were continued for some time, and with great animation. In these John Adams and John Dickinson took leading and opposite parts. The former began one of his speeches, by an invocation of the god of eloquence, to assist him in defending the claims, and in enforcing the duty of his countrymen. He strongly urged the immediate dissolution of all political connexion of the colonies with Great Britain, from the voice of the people, from the necessity of the measure in order to obtain foreign assistance, from a regard to consistency, and from the prospects of glory and happiness, which opened beyond



the war, to a free and independent people. Mr. Dickinson replied to this speech. He began by observing that the member from Massachusetts, Mr. Adams, had introduced his defence of the declaration of independence by invoking an heathen god; but that he should begin his objections to it, by solemnly invoking the Governor of the universe, so to influence the minds of the members of congress, that if the proposed measure were for the benefit of America, nothing which he should say against it might make the least impression. He then urged that the present time was improper for the declaration of independence; that the war might be conducted with equal vigour without it; that it would divide the Americans, and unite the people of Great Britain against them. He then proposed that some assurance should be obtained of assistance from a foreign power, before they renounced their connexion with Great Britain; and that the declaration of independence should be the condition to be offered for this assistance. He likewise stated the disputes that existed between several of the colonies, and proposed that some measures for the settlement of them should be determined upon, before they lost sight of that tribunal, which had hitherto been the umpire of all their differences.

After a full discussion, the measure of declaring the colonies free and independent was approved, by nearly an unanimous vote. The anniversary of the day, on which this great event took place, has ever since been consecrated by the Americans to religious gratitude, and social pleasures. It is considered by them as the birth day of their freedom.

The act of the united colonies, for separating themselves from the government of Great Britain, and declaring their independence, was expressed in the following words:

“When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature, and of nature’s God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind, requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness: that to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its power in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves, by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present king of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations; all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

“He has refused his assent to laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

“He has forbidden his governors to pass laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

“He has refused to pass other laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of representation in the legislature, a right inestimable to them, and formidable to tyrants only.

“He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual,

uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

“ He has dissolved representative houses repeatedly, for opposing, with manly firmness, his invasions on the rights of the people.

“ He has refused, for a long time after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the legislative powers, incapable of annihilation, have returned to the people at large for their exercise; the state remaining in the meantime exposed to all the danger of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

“ He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these states; for that purpose obstructing the laws of naturalization of foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migration hither; and raising the conditions of new appropriations of lands.

“ He has obstructed the administration of justice, by refusing his assent to laws for establishing judiciary powers.

“ He has made judges dependent on his will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

“ He has erected a multitude of new offices, and sent hither swarms of officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance.

“ He has kept among us, in times of peace, standing armies, without the consent of our legislatures.

“ He has affected to render the military independent of, and superior to, the civil power.

“ He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his assent to their acts of pretended legislation:

“ For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

“ For protecting them, by a mock trial, from punishment for any murders which they should commit on the inhabitants of these states:

“ For cutting off our trade with all parts of the world:

“ For imposing taxes on us without our consent;

“ For depriving us, in many cases, of the benefits of trial by jury :

“ For transporting us beyond seas to be tried for pretended offences :

“ For abolishing the free system of English laws in a neighbouring province, establishing therein an arbitrary government, and enlarging its boundaries, so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these colonies :

“ For taking away our charters, abolishing our most valuable laws, and altering fundamentally the forms of our governments :

“ For suspending our own legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

“ He has abdicated government here, by declaring us out of his protection, and waging war against us.

“ He has plundered our seas, ravaged our coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

“ He is, at this time, transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries, to complete the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of cruelty and perfidy, scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the head of a civilized nation.

“ He has constrained our fellow citizens, taken captive on the high seas, to bear arms against their country ; to become the executioners of their friends and brethren, or to fall themselves by their hands.

“ He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers the merciless Indian savages, whose known rule of warfare is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

“ In every stage of these oppressions, we have petitioned for redress in the most humble terms : our repeated petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.



“ Nor have we been wanting in attention to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts made by their legislature, to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity; and we have conjured them, by the ties of our common kindred, to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connexions and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, enemies in war, in peace, friends.

“ We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by authority, of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, **FREE and INDEPENDENT STATES**; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British crown; and that all political connexion between them and the state of Great Britain is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things which independent states may of right do. And, for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour.

“ **JOHN HANCOCK**, President.

“ *New Hampshire*, Josiah Bartlett,  
William Whipple,  
Matthew Thornton.

“ *Massachusetts Bay*, Samuel Adams,  
John Adams,  
Robert Treat Paine,  
Elbridge Gerry.

- “ Rhode Island, &c.* Stephen Hopkins,  
William Ellery.
- “ Connecticut,* Roger Sherman,  
Samuel Huntington,  
William Williams,  
Oliver Wolcott.
- “ New York,* William Floyd,  
Philip Livingston,  
Francis Lewis,  
Lewis Morris.
- “ New Jersey,* Richard Stockton,  
John Witherspoon,  
Francis Hopkinson,  
John Hart,  
Abraham Clark.
- “ Pennsylvania,* Robert Morris,  
Benjamin Rush,  
Benjamin Franklin,  
John Morton,  
George Clymer,  
James Smith,  
George Taylor,  
James Wilson,  
George Ross.
- “ Delaware,* Cæsar Rodney,  
George Read.
- “ Maryland,* Samuel Chase,  
William Paca,  
Thomas Stone,  
Charles Carroll, of Carrollton.
- “ Virginia,* George Wythe,  
Richard Henry Lee,  
Thomas Jefferson,  
Benjamin Harrison,  
Thomas Nelson, jun.  
Francis Lightfoot Lee,  
Carter Braxton.

“ <i>North Carolina,</i>	William Hooper, Joseph Hewes, John Penn.
“ <i>South Carolina,</i>	Edward Rutledge, Thomas Heyward, jun. Thomas Lynch, jun. Arthur Middleton.
“ <i>Georgia,</i>	Button Gwinnett, Lyman Hall, George Walton.”

From the promulgation of this declaration, every thing assumed a new form. The Americans no longer appeared in the character of subjects in arms against their sovereign, but as an independent people, repelling the attacks of an invading foe. The propositions and supplications for reconciliation were done away. The dispute was brought to a single point, whether the late British colonies should be conquered provinces, or free and independent states.

The declaration of independence was read publicly in all the states, and was welcomed with many demonstrations of joy. The people were encouraged by it to bear up under the calamities of war, and viewed the evils they suffered, only as the thorn that ever accompanies the rose. The army received it with particular satisfaction. As far as it had validity, so far it secured them from suffering as rebels, and held out to their view an object, the attainment of which would be an adequate recompense for the toils and dangers of war. They were animated by the consideration that they were no longer to risk their lives for the trifling purpose of procuring a repeal of a few oppressive acts of parliament; but for a new organization of government, that would forever put it out of the power of Great Britain to oppress them. The flattering prospects of an extensive commerce, freed from British restrictions, and the honours and emoluments of offices in independent states, now began to glitter before the eyes of the colonists, and reconciled them to the difficulties of their situation. What was supposed in Great Britain to be their primary object, had only a secondary influence. While they were

charged with aiming at independence from the impulse of avarice and ambition, they were ardently wishing for a reconciliation. But, after they had been compelled to adopt that measure, those powerful principles of human actions opposed its retraction, and stimulated to its support. That separation which the colonists at first dreaded as an evil, they soon gloried in as a national blessing. While the rulers of Great Britain urged their people to a vigorous prosecution of the American war, on the idea that the colonists were aiming at independence, they imposed on them a necessity of adopting that very measure, and actually effected its accomplishment. By repeatedly charging the Americans with aiming at the erection of a new government, and by proceeding on that idea to subdue them, predictions, which were originally false, eventually became true. When the declaration of independence reached Great Britain, the partisans of ministry triumphed in their sagacity. "The measure," said they, "we have long foreseen, is now come to pass." They inverted the natural order of things. Without reflecting that their own policy had forced a revolution contrary to the original design of the colonists, the declaration of independence was held out to the people of Great Britain as a justification of those previous violences, which were its efficient cause.

The act of congress, for dissevering the colonies from their parent state, was the subject of many animadversions.

The colonists were said to have been precipitate in adopting a measure, from which there was no honourable ground of retreating. They replied that, for eleven years, they had been incessantly petitioning the throne for a redress of their grievances; since the year 1765, a continental congress had, at three sundry times, stated their claims, and prayed for their constitutional rights; that each assembly of the thirteen colonies had also, in its separate capacity, concurred in the same measure; that from the perseverance of Great Britain in her schemes for their coercion, they had no alternative, but a mean submission, or a vigorous resistance; and that, as she was about to invade their coasts with a large body of mercenaries, they were compelled to declare them-



selves independent, that they might be put into an immediate capacity of soliciting foreign aid.

The virulence, of those who had been in opposition to the claims of the colonists, was increased by their bold act, in breaking off all subordination to the parent state. "Great Britain," said they, "has founded colonies at great expense; has incurred a load of debts by wars on their account; has protected their commerce, and raised them to all the consequence they possess; and now, in the insolence of adult years, rather than pay their proportion of the common expenses of government, they ungratefully renounce all connexion with the nurse of their youth, and the protectress of their riper years." The Americans acknowledged that much was due to Great Britain, for the protection which her navy procured to the coasts and the commerce of the colonies; but contended that much was paid by the latter, in consequence of the restrictions imposed on their commerce by the former. "The charge of ingratitude would have been just," said they, "had allegiance been renounced while protection was given; but when the navy, which formerly secured the commerce and seaport towns of America, began to distress the former, and burn the latter, the previous obligations to obey, or be grateful, were no longer in force."

That the colonists paid nothing, and would not pay to the support of government, was confidently asserted, and no credit was given for the sums indirectly levied upon them, in consequence of their being confined to the consumption of British manufactures. By such ill-founded observations, were the people of Great Britain inflamed against their fellow subjects in America. The latter were represented as an ungrateful people, refusing to bear any part of the expenses of a protecting government, or to pay their proportion of a heavy debt, said to be incurred on their account. Many of the inhabitants of Great Britain, deceived in matters of fact, considered their American brethren as deserving the severity of military coercion. So strongly were the two countries rivetted together, that if the whole truth had been known to

the people of both, their separation would have been scarcely possible. Any feasible plan, by which subjection to Great Britain could have been reconciled with American safety, would at any time, previous to 1776, have met the approbation of the colonists. But while the lust of power and of gain, blinded the rulers of Great Britain, mistated facts, and uncandid representations brought over their people to second the infatuation. A few honest men, properly authorised, might have devised measures of compromise, which, under the influence of truth, humility and moderation, would have prevented a dismemberment of the empire; but these virtues ceased to influence, and falsehood, haughtiness and blind zeal usurped their places. Had Great Britain, even after the declaration of independence, adopted the magnanimous resolution of declaring her colonies free and independent states, interest would have prompted them to form such a connexion as would have secured to the mother country the advantages of their commerce, without the expense or trouble of their governments. But misguided politics continued the fatal system of coercion and conquest. Several, on both sides of the Atlantic, have called the declaration of independence, “a bold and, accidentally, a lucky speculation;” but subsequent events proved, that it was a wise measure. It is acknowledged, that it detached some timid friends from supporting the Americans in their opposition to Great Britain; but it increased the vigour and union of those, who possessed more fortitude and perseverance. Without it, the colonists would have had no object adequate to the dangers, to which they exposed themselves, in continuing to contend with Great Britain. If the interference of France were necessary to give success to the resistance of the Americans, the declaration of independence was also necessary: for the French expressly founded the propriety of their treaty with congress on the circumstance, “that they found the United States in possession of independence.”

All political connexion between Great Britain and her colonies being dissolved, the institution of new forms of government became unavoidable. The necessity of this was so urgent

that congress, before the declaration of independence, had recommended to the respective assemblies and conventions of the United States, to adopt such governments as should, in their opinion, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents. During more than twelve months, the colonists had been held together by the force of ancient habits, and by laws under the simple style of recommendations. The impropriety of proceeding in courts of justice by the authority of a sovereign, against whom the colonies were in arms, was self-evident. The impossibility of governing, for any length of time, three millions of people, by the ties of honour, without the authority of law, was equally apparent. The rejection of British sovereignty therefore drew after it the necessity of fixing on some other principle of government. The genius of the Americans, their republican habits and sentiments, naturally led them to substitute the majesty of the people, in lieu of discarded royalty. The kingly office was dropped; but in most of the subordinate departments of government, ancient forms and names were retained. Such a portion of power had at all times been exercised by the people and their representatives, that the change of sovereignty was hardly perceptible, and the revolution took place without violence or convulsion. Popular elections elevated private citizens to the same offices, which formerly had been conferred by royal appointment. The people felt an uninterrupted continuation of the blessings of law and government under old names, though derived from a new sovereignty, and were scarcely sensible of any change in their political constitution. The checks and balances, which restrained the popular assemblies under the royal government, were partly dropped, and partly retained, by substituting something of the same kind. The temper of the people would not permit that any one man, however exalted by office, or distinguished by abilities, should have a negative on the declared sense of a majority of their representatives; but the experience of all ages had taught them the danger of lodging all power in one body of men. A second branch of legislature, consisting of a few select persons, under the name of senate,

or council, was therefore constituted in eleven of the thirteen states, and their concurrence made necessary to give the validity of law to the acts of a more numerous branch of popular representatives. New York and Massachusetts went one step further. The former constituted a council of revision, consisting of the governor and the heads of the judicial departments, on whose objections to any proposed law, a reconsideration became necessary ; and unless it was confirmed by two thirds of both houses, it could have no operation. A similar power was given to the governor of Massachusetts. Georgia and Pennsylvania were the only states whose legislatures consisted of only one branch.\* Though many in these states, and a majority in all the others, saw and acknowledged the propriety of a compounded legislature, yet the mode of creating two branches, out of a homogeneous mass of people, was a matter of difficulty. No distinction of ranks existed in the colonies, and none were entitled to any rights, but such as were common to all. Some possessed more wealth than others ; but riches and ability were not always associated. Ten of the eleven states, whose legislatures consisted of two branches, ordained that the members of both should be elected by the people. This rather made two co-ordinate houses of representatives, than a check on a single one, by the moderation of a select few. Maryland adopted a singular plan for constituting an independent senate. By her constitution the members of that body were elected for five years, while the members of the house of delegates held their seats only for one. The number of senators was only fifteen, and they were all elected indiscriminately from the inhabitants of any part of the state, excepting that nine of them were to be residents on the west, and six on the east side of the Chesapeake bay. They were elected not immediately by the people, but by electors, two from each county, appointed by the inhabitants for that sole purpose. By these regulations the senate of Maryland consisted of men of influence, integrity and abilities, and such as were a real and beneficial check on the hasty

\* Altered by subsequent conventions; both states have now a senate.



proceedings of a more numerous branch of popular representatives. The laws of that state were well digested, and its interest steadily pursued with peculiar unity of system; while elsewhere it too often happened in the fluctuation of public assemblies, and where the legislative department was not sufficiently checked, that passion and party predominated over principles and public good.

Pennsylvania, instead of a legislative council or senate, adopted the expedient of publishing bills after the second reading, for the information of the inhabitants. This had its advantages and disadvantages. It prevented the precipitate adoption of new regulations, and gave an opportunity of ascertaining the sense of the people on those laws by which they were to be bound: but it carried the spirit of discussion into every corner, and disturbed the peace and harmony of neighbourhoods. By making the business of government the duty of every man, it drew off the attention of many from the steady pursuit of their respective businesses.

The state of Pennsylvania also adopted another institution peculiar to itself, under the denomination of a council of censors.\* These were to be chosen once every seven years, and were authorised to enquire whether the constitution had been preserved; whether the legislative and executive branch of government, had performed their duty, or assumed to themselves, or exercised other or greater powers, than those to which they were constitutionally entitled; to enquire whether the public taxes had been justly laid and collected, and in what manner the public monies had been disposed of, and whether the laws had been duly executed. However excellent this institution may appear in theory, it is doubtful whether in practice it will answer any valuable end. It most certainly opens a door for discord, and furnishes abundant matter for periodical altercation. Either from the disposition of its inhabitants, its form of government, or some other cause, the people of Pennsylvania have constantly been in a state of fermentation. The end of one public controversy

\* Abolished by a subsequent convention.

has been the beginning of another. From the collision of parties, the minds of the citizens were sharpened, and their active powers improved: but internal harmony has been unknown. They who were out of place, so narrowly watched those who were in, that nothing injurious to the public could be easily effected: but from the fluctuation of power, and the total want of permanent system, nothing great or lasting could with safety be undertaken, or prosecuted to effect. Under all these disadvantages, the state flourished, and, from the industry and ingenuity of its inhabitants, acquired an unrivalled ascendancy in arts and manufactures. This must in a great measure be ascribed to the influence of habits, of order and industry, that had long prevailed.

The Americans agreed in appointing a supreme executive head to each state, with the title either of governor or president. They also agreed in deriving the whole powers of government, either mediately or immediately, from the people. In the eastern states, and in New York, their governors were elected by the inhabitants, in their respective towns or counties, and in the other states by the legislatures:\* but in no case was the smallest tittle of power exercised from hereditary right. New York was the only state which invested its governor with executive authority without a council.† Such was the extreme jealousy of power which pervaded the American states, that they did not think proper to trust the man of their choice with the power of executing their own determinations, without obliging him in many cases to take the advice of such counsellors as they thought proper to nominate. The disadvantages of this institution far outweighed its advantages. Had the governors succeeded by hereditary right, a council would have been often necessary to supply the real want of abilities: but when an individual had been selected by the people, as the fittest person for discharging the duties of his high department, to

\* Pennsylvania has since adopted the popular mode of electing a governor.

† Several states have since abolished councils as part of the executive.

fetter him with a council was either to lessen his capacity of doing good, or to furnish him with a skreen for doing evil. It destroyed the secrecy, vigour and despatch, which the executive power ought to possess; and, by making governmental acts the acts of a body, diminished individual responsibility. In some states it greatly enhanced the expenses of government, and in all retarded its operations, without any equivalent advantages.

New York in another particular, displayed political sagacity, superior to her neighbours. This was in her council of appointment, consisting of one senator from each of her four great election districts, authorised to designate proper persons for filling vacancies in the executive departments of government. Large bodies are far from being the most proper depositaries of the power of appointing to offices. The assiduous attention of candidates is too apt to bias the voice of individuals in popular assemblies. Besides, in such appointments, the responsibility for the conduct of the officer is in a great measure annihilated. The concurrence of a select few in the nomination of one seems a more eligible mode, for securing a proper choice, than appointments made either by one, or by a numerous body. In the former case, there would be danger of favouritism; in the latter, that modest, unassuming merit would be overlooked, in favour of the forward and obsequious.

A rotation of public officers made a part of most of the American constitutions. Frequent elections were required by all: but several refined still further, and deprived the electors of the power of continuing the same office in the same hands, after a specified length of time. Young politicians, suddenly called from the ordinary walks of life, to make laws and institute forms of government, turned their attention to the histories of ancient republics, and the writings of speculative men on the subject of government. This led them into many errors, and occasioned them to adopt sundry opinions, unsuitable to the state of society in America, and contrary to the genius of real republicanism.

The principle of rotation was carried so far, that in some

of the states, public officers in the several departments scarcely knew their official duty, till they were obliged to retire and give place to others, as ignorant as they had been on their first appointment. If offices had been instituted for the benefit of the holders, the policy of diffusing these benefits would have been proper: but instituted as they were for the convenience of the public, the end was marred by such frequent changes. By confining the objects of choice, it diminished the privileges of electors, and frequently deprived them of the liberty of choosing the man who, from previous experience, was of all men the most suitable. The favourers of this system of rotation contended for it, as likely to prevent a perpetuity of office and power in the same individual or family, and as a security against hereditary honours. To this it was replied, that free, fair and frequent elections were the most natural and proper securities, for the liberties of the people. It produced a more general diffusion of political knowledge; but made more smatterers than adepts in the science of government.

As a further security for the continuance of republican principles in the American constitutions, they agreed in prohibiting all hereditary honours and distinction of ranks.

It was one of the peculiarities of these new forms of government, that all religious establishments were abolished. Some retained a constitutional distinction between Christians and others, with respect to eligibility to office: but the idea of supporting one denomination at the expense of others, or of raising any one sect of Christians to a legal pre-eminence, was universally reprobated. The alliance between church and state was completely broken, and each was left to support itself, independent of the other.

The far-famed social compact between the people and their rulers, did not apply to the United States. The sovereignty was in the people. In their sovereign capacity, by their representatives, they agreed on forms of government for their own security, and deputed certain individuals as their agents to serve them in public stations, agreeably to constitutions which they prescribed for their conduct.



The world has not hitherto exhibited so fair an opportunity for promoting social happiness. It is hoped for the honour of human nature, that the result will prove the fallacy of those theories, which suppose that mankind are incapable of self-government. The ancients, not knowing the doctrine of representation, were apt in their public meetings to run into confusion : but in America this mode of taking the sense of the people, is so well understood, and so completely reduced to system, that its most populous states are often peaceably convened in an assembly of deputies, not too large for orderly deliberations, and yet representing the whole in equal proportions. These popular branches of legislature are miniature pictures of the community, and, from the mode of their election, are likely to be influenced by the same interests and feelings with the people whom they represent. As a further security for their fidelity, they are bound by every law they make for their constituents. The assemblage of these circumstances gives as great a security that laws will be made, and government administered for the good of the people, as can be expected from the imperfection of human institutions.

In this short view of the formation and establishment of the American constitutions, we behold our species in a new situation. In no age before, and in no other country, did man ever possess an election of the kind of government, under which he would choose to live. The constituent parts of the ancient free governments were thrown together by accident. The freedom of modern European governments was, for the most part, obtained by the concessions or liberality of monarchs or military leaders. In America alone, reason and liberty concurred in the formation of constitutions. It is true, from the infancy of political knowledge in the United States, there were many defects in their forms of government : but in one thing they were all perfect. They left to the people the power of altering and amending them, whenever they pleased. In this happy peculiarity they placed the science of politics on a footing with the other sciences, by opening it to improvements from experience, and the discoveries of future

ages. By means of this power of amending American constitutions, the friends of mankind have fondly hoped that oppression will one day be no more; and that political evil will at least be prevented or restrained with as much certainty, by a proper combination or separation of power, as natural evil is lessened or prevented, by the application of the knowledge or ingenuity of man to domestic purposes. No part of the history of ancient or modern Europe can furnish a single fact that militates against this opinion; since, in none of its governments, have the principles of equal representation and checks been applied, for the preservation of freedom. On these two pivots are suspended the liberties of most of the states. Where they are wanting, there can be no security for liberty: where they exist, they render any further security unnecessary.

From history the citizens of the United States had been taught, that the maxims, adopted by the rulers of the earth, that society was instituted for the sake of the governors; and that the interests of the many were to be postponed to the convenience of the privileged few, had filled the world with bloodshed and wickedness; while experience had proved, that it is the invariable and natural character of power, whether entrusted or assumed, to exceed its proper limits, and, if unrestrained, to divide the world into masters and slaves. They therefore began upon the opposite maxims, that society was instituted, not for the governors, but the governed; that the interest of the few should in all cases give way to that of the many; that exclusive and hereditary privileges were useless and dangerous institutions in society; and that entrusted authorities should be liable to frequent and periodical recalls. With them the sovereignty of the people was more than a mere theory. The characteristic of that sovereignty was displayed by their authority in written constitutions.

The rejection of British sovereignty not only involved a necessity of erecting independent constitutions, but of cementing the whole United States by some common bond of union. The act of independence did not hold out to the world

thirteen sovereign states, but a common sovereignty of the whole in their united capacity. It therefore became necessary to run the line of distinction, between the local legislatures, and the assembly of states in congress. A committee was appointed for digesting articles of confederation, between the states or united colonies, as they were then called, at the time the propriety of declaring independence was under debate, and some weeks previously to the adoption of that measure: but the plan was not for sixteen months after so far digested, as to be ready for communication to the states. Nor was it finally ratified by the accession of all the states, till nearly three years more had elapsed. In discussing its articles, many difficult questions occurred. One was, to ascertain the ratio of contributions from each state. Two principles presented themselves; numbers of people, and the value of lands. The last was preferred, as being the truest barometer of the wealth of nations: but from an apprehended impracticability of carrying it into effect, it was soon relinquished, and recurrence had to the former. That the states should be represented in proportion to their importance, was contended by those who had extensive territory: but those, who were confined to small dimensions, replied, that the states confederated as individuals in a state of nature, and should therefore have equal votes. The large states yielded the point, and consented that each state should have an equal suffrage.

It was not easy to define the power of the state legislatures, so as to prevent a clashing between their jurisdiction, and that of the general government. It was thought proper, that the former should be abridged of the power of forming any other confederation or alliance; of laying on any imposts or duties that might interfere with treaties made by congress; of keeping up any vessels of war, or granting letters of marque or reprisal. The powers of congress were also defined. Of these, the principal were as follows: To have the sole and exclusive right of determining on peace or war; of sending or receiving ambassadors; of entering into treaties and alliances; of granting letters of marque and reprisal in

times of peace ; to be the last resort on appeal, in all disputes between two or more states ; to have the sole and exclusive right of regulating the alloy and value of coin ; of fixing the standard of weights and measures ; regulating the trade and managing all affairs with the Indians ; establishing and regulating post offices ; to borrow money or emit bills on the credit of the United States ; to build and equip a navy ; to agree upon the number of land forces ; and to make requisitions from each state for its quota of men, in proportion to the number of its white inhabitants.

No coercive power was given to the general government, nor was it invested with any legislative power over individuals, but only over states in their corporate capacity. A power to regulate trade, or to raise a revenue from it, though both were essential to the welfare of the union, made no part of this first federal system. To remedy this and all other defects, a door was left open for introducing further provisions, suited to future circumstances.

The articles of confederation were proposed at a time when the citizens of America were young in the science of politics, and when a commanding sense of duty, enforced by the pressure of a common danger, precluded the necessity of a power of compulsion. The enthusiasm of the day gave such credit and currency to paper emissions, as made the raising of supplies an easy matter. The system of federal government was therefore more calculated for what men then were, under these circumstances, than for the languid years of peace, when selfishness usurped the place of public spirit, and when credit no longer assisted, in providing for the exigencies of government.

The experience of a few years, after the termination of the war, proved, as will appear in its proper place, that a radical change of the whole system was necessary, to the good government of the United States.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

*The Campaign of 1777, in the Middle States.*

SOON after the declaration of independence, the authority of congress was obtained for raising an army, that would be more permanent than the temporary 1777 levies, which they had previously brought into the field. It was at first proposed to recruit for the indefinite term of the war; but it being found on experiment, that the habits of the people were averse to engagements for such an uncertain period of service, the recruiting officers were instructed to offer the alternatives of enlisting either for the war, or for three years. Those who engaged on the first condition were promised a hundred acres of land, in addition to their pay and bounty. The troops raised by congress, for the service of the United States, were called continentals. Though in September, 1776, it had been resolved to raise 88 battalions, and in December following, authority was given to general Washington to raise 16 more, yet very little progress had been made in the recruiting business, till after the battles of Trenton and Princeton. So much time was necessarily consumed, before these new recruits joined the commander in chief, that his whole force, at Morristown and the several out-posts, for some time, did not exceed 1500 men. Yet, these 1500 kept many thousands of the British closely pent up in Brunswick. Almost every party, that was sent out by the latter, was successfully opposed by the former, and the adjacent country preserved in a great degree of tranquility.

It was matter of astonishment, that the British suffered the dangerous interval, between the disbanding of one army and the raising of another, to pass away without attempting something of consequence, against the remaining shadow of an armed force. Hitherto, there had been a deficiency of arms and ammunition, as well as of men: but in the spring a vessel of 24 guns arrived from France, at Portsmouth, in

New Hampshire, with upwards of 11,000 stand of arms, and 1000 barrels of powder. Ten thousand stand of arms arrived about the same time, in another part of the United States.

Before the royal army took the field, in prosecution of the main business of the campaign, two enterprises for the destruction of American stores were undertaken. The first was conducted by colonel Bird; the second by major general Tryon. The former landed with about 500 men at Peek's-kill, near 50 miles from New York. General Washington had repeatedly cautioned the commissaries, not to suffer large quantities of provisions to be near the water: but his prudent advice had not been regarded. The few Americans, who were stationed as a guard at Peek's-kill, on the approach of colonel Bird, fired the principal store-houses, and retired to a good position, two or three miles distant. The loss of provisions, forage, and other valuable articles, was considerable.

Major general Tryon, with a detachment of 2000 men, embarked at New York, and, passing through the Sound, landed between Fairfield and Norwalk. They advanced through the country without interruption, and arrived in about twenty hours at Danbury. On their approach, the few continentals who were in the town withdrew from it. The British began to burn and destroy: but abstained from injuring the property of such as were reputed tories. Eighteen houses, 800 barrels of pork and beef, 800 barrels of flour, 2000 bushels of grain, 1700 tents, and some other articles, were lost to the Americans. Generals Wooster, Arnold, and Silliman, having hastily collected a few hundred of the inhabitants, made arrangements for interrupting the march of the royal detachment: but the arms of those who came forward on this emergency were injured by excessive rains, and the men were worn down with a march of thirty miles in the course of a day. Such dispositions were nevertheless made, and such posts were taken, as enabled them to annoy the invaders when returning to their ships. General Arnold, with about 500 men, by a rapid movement, reached Ridge-

field in their front, barricadoed the road, kept up a brisk fire upon them, and sustained their attack, till they had made a lodgement on a ledge of rocks on his left. After the British had gained this eminence, a whole platoon levelled at general Arnold, not more than thirty yards distant. His horse was killed: but he escaped. While he was extricating himself from his horse, a soldier advanced to run him through with a bayonet: but he shot him dead with his pistol, and afterwards got off safe. The Americans, in several detached parties, harassed the rear of the British, and from various stands kept up a scattering fire upon them, till they reached their shipping.

The British accomplished the object of the expedition: but it cost them dearly. They had, by computation, two or three hundred men killed, wounded, or taken. The loss of the Americans was about twenty killed, and forty wounded. Among the former was Dr. Atwater, a gentleman of character and influence. Colonel Lamb was among the latter. General Wooster, though seventy years old, behaved with the vigour and spirit of youth. While gloriously defending the liberties of his country, he received a mortal wound. Congress resolved, that a monument should be erected to his memory, as an acknowledgement of his merit and services. They also resolved, that a horse, properly caparisoned, should be presented to general Arnold, in their name, as a token of their approbation of his gallant conduct.

Not long after the excursion to Danbury, colonel Meigs, an enterprising American officer, transported a detachment of about 170 Americans, in whale boats, over the Sound, which separates Long Island from Connecticut; burned twelve brigs and sloops, belonging to the British; and destroyed a large quantity of forage and other articles, collected for their use in Sagg-harbour, on that island; killed six of their soldiers, and brought off 90 prisoners, without having a single man either killed or wounded. The colonel and his party returned to Guilford in 25 hours from the time of their departure, having in that short space not only completed the object of their expedition, but traversed by land

and water, a space not less than 90 miles. Congress ordered an elegant sword to be presented to colonel Meigs, for his good conduct in this expedition.

As the season advanced, the American army, in New Jersey, was reinforced by the successive arrivals of recruits : but nevertheless, at the opening of the campaign, June 9th, it amounted only to 7,272 men.

Great pains had been taken to recruit the British army with American levies. A commission of brigadier general had been conferred on Oliver Delancy, a loyalist of great influence in New York, and he was authorised to raise three battalions. Every effort had been made, to raise the men, both within and without the British lines, and also from among the American prisoners: but with all these exertions, only 597 were procured. Courtland Skinner, a loyalist well known in Jersey, was also appointed a brigadier, and authorised to raise five battalions. Great efforts were made to procure recruits for his command: but their whole number amounted only to 517.

Towards the latter end of May, general Washington quitted his winter encampment at Morristown, and took a strong position at Middlebrook. Soon after this movement, the British marched from Brunswick, and extended their van as far as Somerset court-house; but in a few days returned to their former station. This sudden change was owing to the unexpected opposition which seemed to be collecting from all quarters; for the Jersey militia turned out in a very spirited manner, to oppose them. That same army had lately marched through New Jersey, without being fired upon; and even small parties of them had safely patrolled the country, at a distance from their camp: but experience having proved that British protections were no security for property, the inhabitants generally resolved to try the effects of resistance, in preference to a second submission. A fortunate mistake gave them an opportunity of assembling in great force on this emergency. Signals had been agreed on, and beacons erected on high places, with the view of communicating, over the country, instantaneous intelligence of the approach of



the British. A few hours before the royal army began their march, the signal of alarm, on the foundation of a false report, had been hoisted. The farmers, with arms in their hands, ran to the place of rendezvous, from considerable distances. They had set out at least twelve hours before the British, and on their appearance were collected in formidable numbers. Whether sir William Howe intended to force his way through the country to the Delaware, and afterwards to Philadelphia, or to attack the American army, is uncertain; but whatever was his design, he suddenly relinquished it, and fell back to Brunswick. The British army on their retreat, burned and destroyed the farm houses on the road; nor did they spare those buildings which were dedicated to the worship of the Deity.

Sir William Howe, after his retreat to Brunswick, endeavoured to provoke general Washington to an engagement; and left no manœuvre untried, that was calculated to induce him to quit his position. At one time, he appeared as if he intended to push on, without regarding the army opposed to him. At another, he accurately examined the situation of the American encampment, hoping that some unguarded part might be found, on which an attack might be made, that would open the way to a general engagement. All these hopes were frustrated. General Washington knew the full value of his situation. He had too much penetration to lose it from the circumvention of military manœuvres, and too much temper to be provoked to a dereliction of it. He was well apprised that it was not the interest of his country, to commit its fortune to a single action.

Sir William Howe suddenly relinquished his position in front of the Americans, and retired with his whole force to Amboy. The apparently retreating British were pursued by a considerable detachment of the American army, and general Washington advanced from Middlebrook to Quibbletown, to be near at hand for the support of his advanced parties. The British general, on the 24th June, marched his army back from Amboy, with great expedition, hoping to bring on a general action on equal ground, but he was disappointed.

General Washington fell back, and posted his army in such an advantageous position, as compensated for the inferiority of his numbers. Sir William Howe was now fully convinced of the impossibility of compelling a general engagement on equal terms, and also satisfied that it would be too hazardous to attempt passing the Delaware, while the country was in arms, and the main American army in full force in his rear. He therefore returned to Amboy, and thence passed over to Staten Island, resolving to prosecute the objects of the campaign by another route. During the period of these movements, the real designs of general Howe were involved in obscurity. Though the season for military operations was advanced as far as the month of July, yet his determinate object could not be ascertained. Nothing on his part had hitherto taken place, but alternately advancing and retreating. Washington's embarrassment, on this account was increased by intelligence which arrived, that Burgoyne was coming in great force towards New York, from Canada. Apprehending that sir William Howe would ultimately move up the North River, and that his movements, which looked southwardly, were feints, the American general detached a brigade to reinforce the northern division of his army. Successive advices of the advance of Burgoyne favoured the idea, that a junction of the two royal armies near Albany was intended. Some movements were therefore made by Washington, towards Peek's-kill, and on the other side towards Trenton; while the main army was encamped near the Clove, in readiness to march either to the north or south, as the movements of sir William Howe might require. At length, the main body of the royal army, consisting of thirty-six British and Hessian battalions, with a regiment of light horse, and a loyal provincial corps, called the Queen's rangers, and a powerful artillery, amounting in the whole to about 16,000 men, departed from Sandy-hook, and were reported to steer southwardly. About the time of this embarkation, a letter from sir William Howe to general Burgoyne was intercepted. This contained intelligence, that the British troops were destined to New Hampshire. The

intended deception was so superficially veiled, that, in conjunction with the intelligence of the British embarkation, it produced a contrary effect. Within one hour after the reception of this intercepted letter, Washington gave orders to his army to move to the southward; but he was nevertheless so much impressed with a conviction, that it was the true interest of Howe to move towards Burgoyne, that he ordered the American army to halt for some time, at the river Delaware, suspecting that the movement of the royal army to the southward was a feint, calculated to draw him further from the North River. The British fleet, having sailed from Sandy-hook, was a week at sea, before it reached Cape Henlopen. At this time and place, for reasons that do not obviously occur, general Howe gave up the idea of approaching Philadelphia, by ascending the Delaware, and resolved on a circuitous route by the way of the Chesapeake. Perhaps he counted on being joined by large reinforcements, from the numerous tories in Maryland or Delaware, or perhaps he feared the obstructions which the Pennsylvanians had planted in the Delaware. If these were his reasons, he was mistaken in both. From the tories he received no advantage: and from the obstructions in the river, his ships could have received no detriment, if he had landed his troops at New Castle, which was 14 miles nearer Philadelphia, than the head of Chesapeake bay.

The British, after they had left the Capes of the Delaware, had a tedious and uncomfortable passage, being twenty days before they entered the Capes of Virginia. They ascended the bay, with a favourable wind, and on the 25th of August landed at Turkey-point. The circumstance of the British putting out to sea, after they had looked into the Delaware, added to the apprehension before entertained, that the whole was a feint calculated to draw the American army further from the North River, so as to prevent their being at hand to oppose a junction between Howe and Burgoyne. Washington therefore fell back to such a middle station, as would enable him, either speedily to return to the North River, or advance to the relief of Philadelphia. The British fleet, after

leaving the Capes of Delaware, was not heard of for nearly three weeks; except that it had once or twice been seen near the coast, steering southwardly. A council of officers convened at Neshaminy, near Philadelphia, unanimously gave it as their opinion, that Charleston, in South Carolina, was most probably their object, and that it would be impossible for the army to march thither in season for its relief. It was therefore concluded, to try to repair the loss of Charleston, which was considered as unavoidable, either by attempting something on New York island, or, by uniting with the northern army, to give more effectual opposition to Burgoyne. A small change of position, conformably to this new system, took place. The day before the above resolution was adopted, the British fleet entered the Chesapeake. Intelligence, thereof, in a few days reached the American army, and dispelled that mist of uncertainty, in which general Howe's movements had heretofore been enveloped. The American troops were put in motion to meet the British army. Their numbers on paper amounted to 14,000: but their real effective force, on which dependence might be placed in the day of battle, did not much exceed 8000 men. Every appearance of confidence was assumed by them as they passed through Philadelphia, that the citizens might be intimidated from joining the British. About the same time a number of the principal inhabitants of that city, being suspected of disaffection to the American cause, were taken into custody and sent to Virginia.

Soon after sir William Howe had landed his troops in Maryland, he put forth a declaration, in which he informed the inhabitants, that he had issued the strictest orders to the troops, "for the preservation of regularity and good discipline, and that the most exemplary punishment should be inflicted upon those who should dare to plunder the property, or molest the persons of any of his majesty's well disposed subjects." It seemed, as though fully apprised of the consequences, which had resulted from the indiscriminate plunderings of his army in New Jersey, he was determined to adopt a more politic line of conduct. Whatever his lordship's in-



tentions might have been, they were by no means seconded by his troops.

The royal army set out from the eastern heads of the Chesapeake, September 3d, with a spirit which promised to compensate for the various delays, that had hitherto wasted the campaign. Their tents and baggage were left behind, and they trusted their future accommodation to such quarters as their arms might procure. They advanced with boldness, till they were within two miles of the American army, which was then posted near Newport. Washington soon changed his position, and took post on the high ground near Chadd's ford, on the Brandywine creek, with an intention of disputing the passage. It was the wish, but by no means the interest of the Americans, to try their strength in an engagement. Their regular troops were not only greatly inferior in discipline, but in numbers, to the royal army. The opinion of the inhabitants, though founded on no circumstances more substantial than their wishes, imposed a species of necessity on the American general, to keep his army in front of the enemy, and to risk an action for the security of Philadelphia. Instead of this, had he taken the ridge of high mountains on his right, the British must have respected his numbers, and probably would have followed him up the country. By this policy the campaign might have been wasted away in a manner fatal to the invaders; but the majority of the American people were so impatient of delays, and had such an overweening conceit of the numbers and prowess of their army, that they could not comprehend the wisdom and policy of manœuvres, to shun a general engagement.

On this occasion necessity dictated, that a sacrifice should be made on the altar of public opinion. A general action was therefore hazarded on the 11th of September. This took place at Chadd's ford, on the Brandywine; a small stream which empties itself into Christiana creek, near its conflux with the river Delaware.

The royal army advanced at day break in two columns, commanded by lieutenant general Kniphausen, and by lord Cornwallis. The first took the direct road to Chadd's ford,

and made a show of passing it, in front of the main body of the Americans. At the same time, the other column moved up on the west side of the Brandywine to its fork, and crossed both its branches, and then marched down on its east side, with the view of turning the right wing of their adversaries. This they effected, and compelled them to retreat with great loss.

General Kniphausen amused the Americans with the appearance of crossing the ford, but did not attempt it until lord Cornwallis, having crossed above, and moved down on the opposite side, had commenced his attack. Kniphausen then crossed the ford, and attacked the troops posted for its defence. These, after a severe conflict, were compelled to give way. The retreat of the Americans soon became general, and was continued to Chester. The final issue of battles often depends on small circumstances, which human prudence cannot control. One of these occurred here, and prevented general Washington from executing a bold design, to effect which, his troops were actually in motion. This was, to cross the Brandywine, and attack Kniphausen, while general Sullivan and lord Stirling should keep earl Cornwallis in check. In the most critical moment, Washington received intelligence which he was obliged to credit, that the column of lord Cornwallis had been only making a feint, and was returning to join Kniphausen. This prevented the execution of a plan, which, if carried into effect, would probably have given a different turn to the events of the day.

The killed and wounded, in the royal army, were near six hundred. The loss of the Americans was twice that number. In their list of the wounded were two of their general officers, the marquis de la Fayette and general Woodford. The former was a French nobleman of high rank, who, animated with the love of liberty, had left his native country, and offered his service to congress. While in France, and only nineteen years of age, he espoused the cause of the Americans, with the most disinterested and generous ardour. Having determined to join them, he communicated his intentions to the American commissioners, at Paris. They justly conceived,

that a patron of so much importance would be of service to their cause, and encouraged his design. Before he had embarked from France, intelligence arrived in Europe, that the American insurgents, reduced to 2000 men, were fleeing through Jersey before a British force of 30,000. Under these circumstances, the American commissioners at Paris thought it but honest to dissuade him from the present prosecution of his perilous enterprise. It was in vain that they acted so candid a part. His zeal, to serve a distressed country, was not abated by her misfortunes. Having embarked in a vessel, which he purchased for the purpose, he arrived at Charleston, early in 1777, and soon after joined the American army. Congress resolved, that, "in consideration of his zeal, illustrious family and connexions, he should have the rank of major general in their army." Independent of the risk he ran as an American officer, he hazarded his large fortune in consequence of the laws of France, and also the confinement of his person, in case of capture, when on his way to the United States, without the chance of being acknowledged by any nation; for his court had forbidden his proceeding to America, and had dispatched orders to have him confined in the West Indies, if found in that quarter. This gallant nobleman, who, under all these disadvantages, had demonstrated his good will to the United States, received a wound in his leg, at the battle of Brandywine; but he nevertheless continued in the field, and exerted himself both by word and example in rallying the Americans. Other foreigners of distinction also shared in the engagement. Count Pulaski, a Polish nobleman, the same who a few years before carried off king Stanislaus from his capital, though surrounded with a numerous body of guards, and a Russian army, fought with the Americans at Brandywine. He was a thunderbolt of war, and always sought for the post of danger as the post of honour. Soon after this engagement, congress appointed him commander of horse, with the rank of brigadier.

Howe persevered in his scheme of gaining the right flank of the Americans. This was no less steadily pursued on the

one side, than avoided on the other. Washington came forward in a few days with a resolution of risking another action. He accordingly advanced as far as the Warren tavern, on the Lancaster road. Near that place, both armies were on the point of engaging, with their whole force: but were prevented by a most violent storm of rain, which continued for a whole day and night. When the rain ceased, the Americans found that their ammunition was entirely ruined. Before a proper supply was procured, the British marched from their position near the White Horse tavern, down towards the Swedes ford. The Americans again took post in their front: but the British, instead of urging an action, began to march up towards Reading. To save the stores which had been deposited in that place, Washington took a new position, and left the British in undisturbed possession of the roads which lead to Philadelphia. His troops were worn down with a succession of severe duties. There were in his army above a thousand men who were barefooted, and who had performed all their late movements in that condition.

About this time, the Americans sustained a considerable loss by a night attack, conducted by general Grey, on a detachment of their troops, which was encamped near the Paoli tavern. The out-posts and pickets were forced without noise, about one o'clock in the morning of the 20th of September. The men, when they turned out, unfortunately paraded in the light of their fires. This directed the British how, and where to proceed. They rushed in upon them, and put about 300 to death, in a silent manner, by a free and exclusive use of the bayonet. The enterprise was conducted with so much address, that the loss of the assailants did not exceed eight.

Congress, which after a short residence at Baltimore, had returned to Philadelphia, were obliged a second time to consult their safety by flight. They retired at first to Lancaster, and afterwards to Yorktown.

The bulk of the British army being left in Germantown, sir William Howe, with a small part, made his triumphal entry into Philadelphia, on the 26th of September, and was re-



ceived with the hearty welcome of numerous citizens, who, either from conscience, cowardice, interest, or principle, had hitherto separated themselves from the class of active whigs.

The possession of the largest city in the United States, together with the dispersion of that grand council which had heretofore conducted their public affairs, were reckoned by the short-sighted as decisive of their fate. The submission of countries, after the conquest of their capital, had often been a thing of course: but in the great contest for the sovereignty of the United States, the question did not rest with a ruler, or a body of rulers, nor was it to be determined by the possession or loss of any particular place. It was the public mind, the sentiments and opinions of the yeomanry of the country which were to decide. Though Philadelphia had become the residence of the British army, yet as long as the majority of the people of the United States were opposed to their government, the country was unsubdued. Indeed it was presumed by the more discerning politicians, that the luxuries of a great city would so far enervate the British troops, as to indispose them for those active exertions to which they were prompted, while inconveniently encamped in the open country.

To take off the impression the British successes might make in France, to the prejudice of America, Dr. Franklin gave them an ingenious turn, by observing, “that instead of saying sir William Howe had taken Philadelphia, it would be more proper to say, Philadelphia had taken sir William Howe.”

One of the first objects of the British, after they had gotten possession, was to erect batteries to command the river, and to protect the city from any insult by water. The British shipping were prevented from ascending the Delaware, by obstructions hereafter to be described, which were fixed near Mud-Island. Philadelphia, though possessed by the British army, was exposed to danger from the American vessels in the river. The American frigate Delaware, of 32 guns, anchored within 500 yards of the unfinished batteries, and, being

seconded by some smaller vessels, commenced a heavy cannonade upon the batteries and town; but upon the falling of the tide, she ran aground. Being briskly fired upon from the town, while in this condition, she was compelled to surrender. The other American vessels, not able to resist the fire from the batteries, after losing one of their number, retired.

General Washington, having been reinforced by 2500 men from Peek's-kill and Virginia; and having been informed, that general Howe had detached a considerable part of his force, for reducing the forts on the Delaware, conceived a design of attacking the British post at Germantown. Their line of encampment crossed the town at right angles near its centre. The left wing extended to the Schuylkill, and was covered in front by the mounted and dismounted chasseurs. The Queen's American rangers and a battalion of light infantry were in front of the right. The 40th regiment, with another battalion of light infantry, were posted on the Chesnut-hill road, three quarters of a mile in advance. Lord Cornwallis lay at Philadelphia, with four battalions of grenadiers. A few of the general officers of the American army, whose advice was requested on the occasion, unanimously recommended an attack; and it was agreed that it should be made in different places, to produce the greater confusion, and to prevent the several parts of the British forces from affording support to each other. From an apprehension, that the Americans, from the want of discipline, would not persevere in a long attack, it was resolved that it should be sudden and vigorous; and if unsuccessful to make an expeditious retreat. The divisions of Sullivan and Wayne, flanked by Conway's brigade, were to enter the town by the way of Chesnut-hill, while general Armstrong with the Pennsylvania militia should fall down the Manatawny road, and gain the left and rear of the British. The divisions of Greene and Stephens, flanked by M'Dougal's brigade, were to enter by the Lime-kiln road. The militia of Maryland and Jersey, under generals Smallwood and Furman, were to march by the old York road, and to fall upon the rear of their right.

Lord Stirling, with Nash's and Maxwell's brigade, were to form a corps of reserve. The Americans began their attack about sunrise, on the 4th of October, on the 40th regiment, and a battalion of light infantry. These two corps, being obliged to retreat, were pursued into the village. On their retreat, lieutenant colonel Musgrove, with six companies, took post in Chew's strong stone house, which lay in front of the Americans. From an adherence to the military maxim of never leaving a fort possessed by an enemy in the rear, it was resolved to attack the party in the house.

In the meantime general Greene got up with his column, and attacked the right wing. Colonel Mathews routed a party of the British opposed to him, killed several, and took 110 prisoners: but, from the darkness of the day, lost sight of the brigade to which he belonged; and having separated from it, was taken prisoner with his whole regiment: and the prisoners, which he had previously taken, were released. A number of the troops in Greene's division were stopped by the halt of the party before Chew's house. Near one half of the American army remained for some time at that place inactive. In the meantime, general Grey led on three battalions of the third brigade, and attacked with vigour. A sharp contest followed. Two British regiments attacked at the same time on the opposite side of the town. General Grant moved up the 49th regiment to the aid of those who were engaged with Greene's column.

The morning was foggy. This, by concealing the true situation of the parties, occasioned mistakes, and made so much caution necessary as gave the British time to recover from the effects of their first surprise. From these causes, the early promising appearances on the part of the assailants were speedily reversed. The Americans left the field hastily, and all efforts to rally them were ineffectual. Lord Cornwallis arrived with a party of light horse, and joined in the pursuit. This was continued for some miles. The loss of the royal army, including the wounded and prisoners, was about 500. Among their slain were brigadier general Agnew, and lieutenant colonel Bird. The loss of the Ame-

ricans, including 400 prisoners, was about 1000. Among their slain were general Nash and his aid-de-camp major Witherspoon.

Soon after this battle, the British left Germantown, and turned their principal attention towards opening a free communication between their army and their shipping.

Much industry and ingenuity had been exerted for the security of Philadelphia on the water side. Thirteen galleys, two floating batteries, two zebuques, one brig, one ship, besides a number of armed boats, fire ships and rafts, were constructed or employed for this purpose. The Americans also had built a fort on Mud-Island, to which they gave the name of Fort Mifflin, and erected thereon a considerable battery. This island is admirably situated for the erection of works to annoy shipping on their way up the Delaware. It lies near the middle of the river, about seven miles below Philadelphia. No vessels of burden can come up but by the main ship channel, which passes close to Mud-Island, and is very narrow for more than a mile below. Opposite to Fort Mifflin there is a height, called Red-Bank. This overlooks not only the river, but the neighbouring country. On this eminence, a respectable battery was erected. Between these two fortresses, which are half a mile distant from each other, the American naval armament, for the defence of the river Delaware, made its harbour of retreat. Two ranges of chevaux-de-frise were also sunk in the channel. These consisted of large pieces of timber, strongly framed together, in the manner usual for making the foundation of wharves, in deep water. Several large points of bearded iron projecting down the river, were annexed to the upper parts of these chevaux-de-frise, and the whole was sunk with stones, so as to be about four feet under water at low tide. Their prodigious weight and strength could not fail to effect the destruction of any vessel which came upon them. Thirty of these machines were sunk about three hundred yards below Fort Mifflin, so as to stretch in a diagonal line across the channel. The only open passage left was between two piers lying close to the fort, and that was secured by a strong boom, and could



not be approached but in a direct line to the battery. Another fortification was erected on a high bank on the Jersey shore, called Billingsport. And opposite to this, another range of chevaux-de-frise was deposited, leaving only a narrow and shoal channel on the one side. There was also a temporary battery of two heavy cannon, at the mouth of Mantua creek; about half way from Red-Bank to Billingsport. The British were well apprised, that, without the command of the Delaware, their possession of Philadelphia would be of no advantage. They therefore strained every nerve, to open the navigation of that river. To this end lord Howe had early taken the most effectual measures for conducting the fleet and transports round, from the Chesapeake to the Delaware, and drew them up on the Pennsylvania shore, from Reedy-Island to Newcastle. Early in October, a detachment from the British army crossed the Delaware, with a view of dislodging the Americans from Billingsport. On their approach, the place was evacuated. As the season advanced, more vigorous measures for removing the obstructions were concerted between the general and the admiral. Batteries were erected on the Pennsylvania shore, to assist in dislodging the Americans from Mud-Island. At the same time, count Donop with 2000 men, having crossed into New Jersey, opposite to Philadelphia, marched down on the eastern side of the Delaware, to attack the redoubt at Red-Bank. This was defended by about 400 men, under the command of colonel Greene. The attack immediately commenced by a smart cannonade, under cover of which the count advanced to the redoubt. This place was intended for a much larger garrison than was then in it. It had therefore become necessary to run a line in the middle thereof, and one part of it was evacuated. That part was easily carried by the assailants, on which they indulged in loud huzzas for their supposed victory. The garrison kept up a severe, well-directed fire on the assailants, by which they were compelled to retire. They suffered not only in the assault, but in the approach to, and retreat from the fort. Their whole loss in killed and wounded was about 400. Count

Donop was mortally wounded and taken prisoner. Congress resolved, to present colonel Greene with a sword for his good conduct on this occasion. An attack, made about the same time on Fort Mifflin, by men of war and frigates, was not more successful than the assault on Red-Bank. The *Augusta* of 64 guns, and the *Merlin*, two of the vessels which were engaged in it, got aground. The former was fired, and blew up. The latter was evacuated.

Though the first attempts of the British, for opening the navigation of the Delaware, were unsuccessful, they carried their point in another way that was unexpected. The chevaux-de-frise, having been sunk some considerable time, the current of the water was diverted by this great bulk into new channels. In consequence thereof, the passage between the islands and the Pennsylvania shore was so deepened as to admit vessels of considerable draught of water. Through this passage, the *Vigilant*, a large ship, cut down so as to draw but little water, mounted with 24 pounders, made her way to a position from which she might enfilade the works on Mud-Island. This gave the British such an advantage, that the post was no longer tenable. Colonel Smith, who had with great gallantry defended the fort from the latter end of September, to the 11th of November, being wounded, was removed to the main. Within five days after his removal, major Thayer, who as a volunteer had nobly offered to take charge of this dangerous post, was obliged to evacuate it.

This event did not take place till the works were entirely beat down, every piece of cannon dismounted, and one of the British ships so near, that she threw grenades into the fort, and killed the men uncovered in the platform. The troops, who had so bravely defended Fort Mifflin, made a safe retreat to Red-Bank. Congress voted swords to be given to lieutenant colonel Smith, and commodore Hazlewood, for their gallant defence of the Delaware. Within three days after Mud-Island was evacuated, the garrison was also withdrawn from Red-Bank, on the approach of lord Cornwallis, at the head of a large force prepared to assault it. Some of the

American galleys and armed vessels, escaped by keeping close in with the Jersey shore, to places of security above Philadelphia; but 17 of them were abandoned by their crews, and fired. Thus the British gained a free communication between their army and shipping. This event was to them very desirable. They had been previously obliged to draw their provisions from Chester, a distance of fifteen miles, at some risk, and a certain great expense. The long protracted defence of the Delaware, deranged the plans of the British, for the remainder of the campaign, and consequently saved the adjacent country.

About this time, the chair of congress became vacant, by the departure of Mr. Hancock, after he had discharged the duties of that office to great acceptance, two years and five months. Henry Laurens, of South Carolina, was unanimously elected his successor on the 1st of November. He had been in England for some years, antecedent to the hostile determinations of parliament against the colonies; but finding the dispute growing serious, he conceived that honour and duty called him to take part with his native country. He had been warmly solicited to stay in England; and offers were made him not only to secure, but to double his American estate, in case of his continuing to reside there: but these were refused. To a particular friend in London, dissuading him from coming out to America, he replied on the 9th of November 1774, when at Falmouth, on the point of embarking, "I shall never forget your friendly attention to my interest; but I dare not return. Your ministers are deaf to information, and seem bent on provoking unnecessary contest. I think I have acted the part of a faithful subject. I now go resolved still to labour for peace; at the same time determined in the last event to stand or fall with my country."

When sir William Howe was succeeding in every enterprise in Pennsylvania, intelligence arrived, as shall be related in the next chapter, that general Burgoyne and his whole army had surrendered prisoners of war to the Americans.

General Washington soon afterwards received a conside-

rable reinforcement from the northern army, which had accomplished this great event. With this increased force, he took a position at and near Whitemarsh. The royal army, having succeeded in removing the obstructions in the river Delaware, were ready for new enterprises. Sir William Howe, on the 4th of December, marched out of Philadelphia with almost his whole force, expecting to bring on a general engagement. The next morning, he appeared on Chesnut-hill in front of, and about three miles distant from, the right wing of the Americans. On the day following, the British changed their ground, and moved to the right. Two days after, they moved still further to the right, and exhibited every appearance of an intention to attack the American encampment. Some skirmishes took place, and a general action was hourly expected: but instead thereof, on the morning of the next day, December 9th, after various marches and countermarches, the British filed off from their right, by two or three different routes, in full march for Philadelphia.

The position of General Washington, in a military point of view, was admirable. He was so sensible of the advantages of it, that the manœuvres of sir William Howe for some days could not allure him from it. In consequence of the reinforcement lately received, he had not in any preceding period of the campaign been in an equal condition for a general engagement. Though he ardently wished to be attacked, yet he would not relinquish a position, from which he hoped to repair the misfortunes of the campaign. He could not believe, that general Howe with a victorious army, and that lately reinforced with four thousand men from New York, should come out of Philadelphia, only to return thither again. He therefore presumed, that to avoid the disgrace of such a movement, the British commander would, from a sense of military honour, be compelled to attack him, though under great disadvantages. When he found him cautious of engaging and inclining to his left, a daring design was formed, which would have been executed, had the British either continued in their position, or moved a little further to the left



of the American army. This was to have attempted in the night to surprise Philadelphia. The necessary preparations for this purpose were made; but the retreat of the British prevented its execution.

Soon after these events, general Smallwood with a considerable force, was posted at Wilmington, on the banks of the Delaware: and Washington, with the main army, retired to winter quarters at Valley Forge, 16 miles from Philadelphia. This position was preferred to distant and more comfortable villages, as being calculated to give the most extensive security to the country. The American army might have been tracked, by the blood of their feet, in marching without shoes or stockings over the hard frozen ground, between White-marsh and Valley Forge. Some hundreds of them were without blankets. Under these circumstances, they had to sit down in a wood, in the latter end of December, and to build huts for their accommodation. This mode of procuring winter quarters, if not entirely novel, has been rarely, if ever practised in modern war. The cheerfulness with which the general and his army submitted to spend a severe winter, in such circumstances, rather than leave the country exposed, by retiring further, demonstrated as well their patriotism as their fixed resolution to suffer every inconvenience, in preference to submission.

Thus ended the campaign of 1777. Though sir William Howe's army had been crowned with the most brilliant success, having gained two considerable victories, and been equally triumphant in many smaller actions, yet the whole amount of this tide of good fortune was no more than a good winter lodging for his troops in Philadelphia; whilst the men under his command possessed no more of the adjacent country, than what they immediately commanded with their arms. The congress, it is true, was compelled to leave the first seat of their deliberations: and the greatest city in the United States changed a number of its whig inhabitants for a numerous royal army; but it is as true that the minds of the Americans were, if possible, more hostile to the claims of Great Britain than ever, and their army had gained as much by

discipline and experience, as compensated for its diminution by defeats.

The events of this campaign were adverse to the sanguine hopes, which had been entertained, of a speedy conquest of the revolted colonies. Repeated proofs had been given, that, though Washington was very forward to engage when he thought it to his advantage, yet it was impossible for the royal commander to bring him to action against his consent. By this mode of conducting the defence of the new formed states, two campaigns had been wasted away, and the work which was originally allotted for one, was still unfinished.

An account of some miscellaneous transactions will close this chapter. Lieutenant colonel Barton, of a militia regiment of the state of Rhode Island, accompanied by about forty volunteers, passed by night, on the 9th of July, from Warwick neck to Rhode Island, surprised general Prescott in his quarters, and brought him and one of his aids safe off to the continent. Though they had a passage of ten miles by water, they eluded the ships of war and guard boats, which lay all round the island. The enterprise was conducted with so much silence and address, that there was no alarm among the British, till the colonel and his party had nearly reached the continent with their prize. Congress soon after resolved, that an elegant sword should be presented to lieutenant colonel Barton, as a testimonial of their sense of his gallant behaviour.

It has already been mentioned, that congress, in the latter end of November, 1775, authorised the capture of vessels, laden with stores or reinforcements for their enemies. On the 23d of March, 1776, they extended this permission so far, as to authorise their inhabitants to fit out armed vessels, to cruise on the enemies of the United colonies. The Americans henceforth devoted themselves to privateering, and were very successful. In the course of the year, they made many valuable captures, particularly of homeward bound West Indiamen. The particulars cannot be enumerated; but good judges have calculated, that within nine months after congress authorised privateering, the British loss in

captures, exclusive of transports and government store ships, exceeded a million sterling. They found no difficulty in selling their prizes. The ports of France were open to them, both in Europe and in the West Indies. In the latter they were sold without any disguise: but in the former a greater regard was paid to appearances. Open sales were not permitted in the harbours of France at particular times; but even then they were made at the entrance, or offing.

In the French West India Islands, the inhabitants not only purchased prizes, brought in by the American cruisers, but fitted out privateers under American colours and commissions, and made captures of British vessels. William Bingham, of Philadelphia, was stationed as the agent of congress, at Martinico: and he took an early and active part in arming privateers in St. Pierre, to annoy and cruise against British property. The favourable disposition of the inhabitants furnished him with an opportunity, which he successfully improved, not only to distress the British commerce, but to sow the seeds of discord between the French and English. The American privateers also found countenance in some of the ports of Spain; but not so readily, nor so universally as in those of France. The British took many of the American vessels. Such of them, as were laden with provisions, proved a seasonable relief to their West India islands, which otherwise would have suffered from the want of those supplies, that before the war had been usually procured from the neighbouring continent.

The American privateers, in the year 1777, increased in numbers and boldness. They insulted the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland, in a manner that had never before been attempted. Such was their spirit of adventure, that it became necessary to appoint a convoy for the protection of the linen ships from Dublin and Newry. The general Mislin privateer, after making repeated captures, arrived at Brest, and saluted the French admiral. This was returned in form, as to the vessel of an independent power. Lord Stormont, the British ambassador, at the court of Versailles, irritated at the countenance given to the Americans, threatened to

return immediately to London, unless satisfaction were given, and different measures were adopted by France. An order was issued in consequence of his application, requiring all American vessels to leave the port of His Most Christian Majesty: but though the order was positive, so many evasions were practised, and the execution of it was so relaxed, that it produced no permanent discouragement of the beneficial intercourse.



## CHAPTER XIV.

*The Northern Campaign of 1777.*

TO effect a free communication between New York and Canada, and to maintain the navigation of the intermediate lakes, were principal objects with the British, in the campaign of 1777. The Americans, presuming on this, had been early attentive to their security in that quarter. They had resolved to construct a fort on Mount Independence, an eminence adjoining the strait on which Ticonderoga stands, and nearly opposite to that fortress. They had also resolved, to obstruct the navigation of the strait by cassoons, to be sunk in the water, and joined so as to serve at the same time for a bridge, between the fortifications on the east and west sides of it; that, to prevent the British from drawing their small craft over land into lake George, the passage of that lake should be obstructed; that Fort Schuyler, the same which had formerly been called Fort Stanwix, should be strengthened, and other fortifications erected near the Mohawk river. Requisitions were made, by the commanding officer in the department, for 13,600 men, as necessary for the security of this district. The adjacent states were urged to fill up their recruits, and in all respects to be in readiness for an active campaign.

The British ministry were very sanguine in their calculations, on the consequences of forming a line of communication between New York and Canada. They considered the New England people to be the soul of the confederacy, and promised themselves much by severing them from all free communication with the neighbouring states. They hoped, when this was accomplished, to be able to surround them so effectually with fleets, armies, and Indian allies, as to compel their submission. Animated with these expectations, they left nothing undone, which bid fair for insuring the success of their plans.

The regular troops, British and German, allotted to this service were upwards of 7000. As artillery is considered to be particularly useful in an American war, where numerous inhabitants are to be driven out of woods and fastnesses, this part of the service was particularly attended to. The brass train, that was sent out, was perhaps the finest, and the most excellently supplied, both as to officers and men, that had ever been allotted to second the operations of an equal force. In addition to the regulars, it was supposed that the Canadians and the loyalists, in the neighbouring states, would add large reinforcements, well calculated for the peculiar nature of the service. Arms and accoutrements were accordingly provided to supply them. Several nations of savages had also been induced to take up the hatchet, as allies to his Britannic majesty. Not only the humanity, but the policy of employing them was questioned in Great Britain. The opposers of it contended that Indians were capricious, inconstant and intractable; their rapacity insatiate, and their actions cruel and barbarous. At the same time, their services were represented to be uncertain, and their engagements, without the least claim to confidence. On the other hand, the zeal of British ministers for reducing the revolted colonies was so violent, as to make them, in their excessive wrath, forget that their adversaries were men. They contended, that in their circumstances every appearance of lenity, by inciting to disobedience, and thereby increasing the objects of punishment, was eventually cruelty. In their opinion, partial severity was general mercy; and the only method of speedily crushing the rebellion, was, to envelope its abettors in such complicated distress, as, by rendering their situation intolerable, would make them willing to accept the proffered blessings of peace and security. The sentiments of those, who were for employing Indians against the Americans, prevailed. Presents were liberally distributed among them. Induced by these, and also by their innate thirst for war and plunder, they poured forth their warriors in such abundance, that their numbers threatened to be an incumbrance.

The vast force destined for this service was put under the command of lieutenant general Burgoyne, an officer whose abilities were well known, and whose spirit of enterprise and thirst for military fame could not be exceeded. He was supported by major general Philips of the artillery, who had established a solid reputation by his good conduct during the late war in Germany, and by major general Reidesel, and brigadier general Speecht, of the German troops, together with the British generals Frazer, Powel and Hamilton, all officers of distinguished merit.

The British had also undisputed possession of the navigation of lake Champlain. Their marine force thereon, with which in the preceding campaign they had destroyed the American shipping on the lakes, was not only entire, but unopposed.

A considerable force was left in Canada for its internal security, and sir Guy Carleton's military command was restricted to the limits of that province. Though the British ministry attributed the preservation of Canada to his abilities in 1775 and 1776, yet, by their arrangements for the year 1777, he was only called upon to act a secondary part, in subserviency to the grand expedition committed to general Burgoyne. His behaviour on this occasion was conformable to the greatness of his mind. Instead of thwarting or retarding a service which was virtually taken out of his hands, he applied himself to support and forward it in all its parts, with the same diligence as if the arrangement had been entirely his own, and committed to himself for execution.

The plan of the British, for their projected irruption into the north-western frontier of New York, consisted of two parts. General Burgoyne with the main body was to advance by the way of lake Champlain, with positive orders, as has been said, to force his way to Albany, or at least so far as to effect a junction with the royal army from New York. A detachment was to ascend the river St. Lawrence, as far as lake Ontario, and, from that quarter, to penetrate towards Albany, by the way of the Mohawk river. This was

put under the command of lieutenant colonel St. Leger, and consisted of about 200 British troops, a regiment of New York loyalists, raised and commanded by sir John Johnson, and a large body of savages. Lieutenant general Burgoyne arrived in Quebec on the 6th of May, and exerted all diligence to prosecute in due time the objects of the expedition. He proceeded up lake Champlain, and landed near Crown-Point. At this place he met the Indians, gave them a war feast, and made a speech to them. This was well calculated to excite them to take part with the royal army; but at the same time to repress their barbarity. He pointedly forbade them to shed blood when not opposed in arms, and commanded that aged men, women, children and prisoners should be held sacred from the knife and the hatchet, even in the heat of actual conflict. A reward was promised for prisoners, and a severe inquiry threatened for scalps; though permission was granted to take them from those who were previously killed in fair opposition. These restrictions were not sufficient to restrain their barbarities. The Indians having decidedly taken part with the British army, general Burgoyne issued a proclamation, calculated to spread terror among the inhabitants. The numbers of his Indian associates were magnified, and their eagerness to be let loose to their prey described in high sounding words. The force of the British armies and fleets, prepared to crush every part of the revolted colonies, was also displayed in pompous language. Encouragement and employment were promised to those who should assist in the re-establishment of legal government, and security held out to the peaceable and industrious, who continued in their habitations. All the calamities of war, arrayed in their most terrific forms, were denounced against those who should persevere in a military opposition to the royal forces.

General Burgoyne advanced with his army, on the 30th of June, to Crown-Point. At this place he issued orders, of which the following words are a part: "The army embarks to-morrow to approach the enemy. The services required on this expedition are critical and conspicuous. During our



progress occasions may occur, in which, nor difficulty, nor labour, nor life, are to be regarded. This army must not retreat." From Crown-Point, the royal army proceeded to invest Ticonderoga. On their approach, they advanced with equal caution and order on both sides of the lake, while their naval force kept in its centre. Within a few days, they had surrounded three-fourths of the American works, at Ticonderoga and Mount Independence; and had also advanced a work on Sugar-hill, so far towards completion, that in 24 hours it would have been ready to open. In these circumstances, general St. Clair, the commanding officer, resolved to evacuate the post: but conceiving it prudent to take the sentiments of the general officers, he called a council of war on the occasion. It was represented to this council, that their whole numbers were not sufficient to man one half of the works; that, as the whole must be on constant duty, it would be impossible for them to sustain the necessary fatigue for any length of time; and that, as the place would be completely invested on all sides within a day, nothing but an immediate evacuation of the posts could save their troops. The situation of general St. Clair was eminently embarrassing. Such was the confidence of the states in the fancied strength of this post, and of the supposed superiority of force for its defence, that to retreat without risking an action could not fail of drawing on him the execration of the multitude. To stand still, and, by suffering himself to be surrounded, to risk his whole army for a single post, was contrary to the true interest of the states. In this trying situation, with the unanimous approbation of a council of his general officers, he adopted the heroic resolution of sacrificing personal reputation to save his army.

The assumption of confident appearances, by the garrison, had induced their adversaries to proceed with caution. While from this cause they were awed into respect, the evacuation was completed with so much secrecy and expedition, that a considerable part of the public stores was saved, and the whole would have been embarked, had not a violent gale of wind prevented the boats from reaching their station.

The works, abandoned by the Americans, were chiefly the old French lines constructed in the late war between France and England, which had been repaired the year before, and were in good order. New works were begun on the mount; but there was neither time nor strength of hands to complete them. A great deal of timber had been felled between the East creek and the foot of the mount, to retard the approaches of the British. All the redoubts on the low ground were abandoned, for want of men to occupy them. These works, together with 93 pieces of ordnance, and a large collection of provisions, fell into the hands of the British.

This evacuation of Ticonderoga, July 6, was the subject of a severe scrutiny. Congress recalled their general officers in the northern department, and ordered an enquiry into their conduct. They also nominated two gentlemen of eminence in the law, to assist the judge advocate in prosecuting that inquiry, and appointed a committee of their own body to collect evidence in support of the charges, which were on this occasion brought against them. General St. Clair, from the necessity of the case, submitted to this innovation in the mode of conducting courts martial; but in behalf of the army protested against its being drawn into precedent. Charges, of no less magnitude than cowardice, incapacity and treachery, were brought forward in court against him, and believed by many. The public mind, sore with the loss of Ticonderoga, and apprehensive of general distress, sought to ease itself by throwing blame on the general. When the situation of the army permitted an inquiry into his conduct, he was honourably acquitted. In the course of his trial, it was made to appear, that, though 13,600 men had been early called for, as necessary to defend the northern posts, yet, on the approach of general Burgoyne, the whole force collected to oppose him was only 2546 continentals, and 900 militia badly supplied, and worse armed. From the insufficiency of their numbers, they could not possess themselves of Sugar-hill, nor of Mount-Hope, though the former commanded the works, both of Ticonderoga, and Mount Independence, and the latter was of

great importance for communication with lake George, and had been fortified the year before with that view. To the question which had been repeatedly asked; "why was the evacuation, if really necessary, delayed till the Americans were so nearly surrounded, as to occasion the loss of such valuable stores?" it was answered; that "from various circumstances it was impossible for general St. Clair to get early information of the numbers opposed to him. The savages, whom the British kept in front, deterred small reconnoitring parties, from approaching so near as to make any discoveries of their numbers. Large parties, from the nature of the ground, could not have been supported without risking a general action. From the combined operation of circumstances, the numbers of the approaching royal army were effectually concealed from the garrison, till the van of their force appeared in full view before it." The retreating army embarked as much of their baggage and stores as they had any prospect of saving, and despatched it under convoy of five armed gallies to Skenesborough. Their main body took its route towards the same place by way of Castleton. The British were no sooner apprised of the retreat of the Americans than they pursued them. General Frazer, at the head of the light troops, advanced on their main body. Major general Reidesel was also ordered, with the greater part of the Brunswick troops, to march in the same direction. General Burgoyne in person conducted the pursuit by water. The obstructions to the navigation, not having been completed, were soon cut through. The two frigates, the Royal George and the Inflexible, together with the gun boats, having effected their passage, pursued with so much rapidity, that in the course of a day the gun boats came up with and attacked the American gallies, near Skenesborough falls. On the approach of the frigates, all opposition ceased. Two of the gallies were taken, and three blown up. The Americans set fire to their works, mills and batteaux. They were now left in the woods, destitute of provisions. In this forlorn situation, they made their escape up Wood-creek to Fort Anne. Brigadier Frazer pursued the retreating Americans, came

up with, and attacked them. They made a gallant resistance, but, after sustaining considerable loss, were obliged to give way. Lieutenant colonel Hall, with the 9th British regiment, was detached from Skenesborough by general Burgoyne, to take post near fort Anne. An engagement ensued between this regiment and a few Americans; but the latter, after a conflict of two hours, fired the fort, and retreated to Fort Edward. The destruction of the galleys and batteaux of the Americans at Skenesborough, and the defeat of their rear, obliged general St. Clair, in order to avoid being between two fires, to change the route of his main body, and to turn off from Castleton to the left. After a fatiguing and distressing march of seven days, he joined general Schuyler at Fort Edward. Their combined forces, inclusive of the militia, not exceeding in the whole 4400 men, were, on the approach of general Burgoyne, compelled to retire further into the country, bordering on Albany.

Such was the rapid torrent of success, which, in this period of the campaign, swept away all opposition from before the royal army. The officers and men were highly elated with their good fortune. They considered their toils to be nearly at an end; Albany to be within their grasp; and the conquest of the adjacent provinces reduced to a certainty. In Great Britain, intelligence of the progress of Burgoyne diffused a general joy. As to the Americans, the loss of reputation, which they sustained in the opinion of their European admirers, was greater than their loss of posts, artillery and troops. They were stigmatized as wanting resolution. Their unqualified subjugation, or unconditional submission was considered as being near at hand. An opinion was diffused, that the war in effect was over, or that the further resistance of the colonists would serve only to make the terms of their submission more humiliating. The terror which the loss of Ticonderoga spread throughout the New England states was great; but nevertheless no disposition to purchase safety by submission, appeared in any quarter. They did not sink under the apprehensions of danger, but acted with vigour and firmness. The royal army, after these successes, continued



for some days in Skenesborough, waiting for their tents, baggage and provision. In the meantime, general Burgoyne put forth a proclamation, in which he called on the inhabitants of the adjacent towns, to send a deputation of ten or more persons, from their respective townships, to meet colonel Skene at Castleton, on the 15th of July. The troops were at the same time busily employed in opening a road, and clearing a creek, to favour their advance, and to open a passage for the conveyance of their stores. A party of the royal army, which had been left behind at Ticonderoga, was equally industrious in carrying gun boats, provisions, vessels, and batteaux over land into lake George. An immensity of labour in every quarter was necessary; but animated as they were with past successes and future hopes, they disregarded toil and danger.

From Skenesborough, general Burgoyne directed his course across the country to Fort Edward, on Hudson's River. Though the distance in a right line from one to the other is but a few miles, yet such is the impracticable nature of the country, and such were the artificial difficulties thrown in his way, that nearly as many days were consumed as the distance passed over in a direct line would have measured in miles. The Americans, under the direction of general Schuyler, had cut large trees on both sides of the road, so that they fell across it with their branches interwoven. The face of the country was likewise so broken with creeks and marshes, that they had no less than forty bridges to construct, one of which was a log-work over a morass, two miles in extent. This difficult march might have been avoided, had general Burgoyne fallen back from Skenesborough to Ticonderoga, and thence proceeded by lake George; but he declined this route, from an apprehension that a retrograde motion on his part would abate the panic of the enemy. He had also a suspicion that some delay might be occasioned by the American garrison at Fort George; as in case of his taking that route, they might safely continue to resist to the last extremity, having open in their rear a place of retreat. On the other hand it was presumed, that as soon as they knew

that the royal army was marching in a direction which was likely to cut off their retreat, they would consult their safety by a seasonable evacuation. In addition to these reasons, he had the advice and persuasion of colonel Skene. That gentleman had been recommended to him as a person proper to be consulted. His land was so situated, that the opening of a road between Fort Edward and Skenesborough, would greatly enhance its value. This circumstance might have made him more urgent in his recommendations of that route, especially since, being the shortest, it bid fair for uniting the royal interest with private convenience. The opinion formed by general Burgoyne of the effect of his direct movement from Skenesborough, to Fort Edward, on the American garrison, was verified by the event; for being apprehensive of having their retreat cut off, they abandoned their fort, and burnt their vessels. The navigation of lake George being thereby left free, provisions and ammunition were brought forward from Fort George, to the first navigable parts of Hudson's River. This is a distance of 15 miles, and the roads of difficult passage. The intricate combination of land and water carriage, together with the insufficient means of transportation, and excessive rains, caused such delays, that, at the end of fifteen days, there were not more than four days provision brought forward, nor above ten batteaux in the river. The difficulties of this conveyance, as well as of the march through the wilderness from Skenesborough to Fort Edward, were encountered and overcome by the royal army, with a spirit and alacrity which could not be exceeded. At length, on the 30th of July, after incredible fatigue and labour, general Burgoyne, and the army under his command reached Fort Edward, on Hudson's River. Their exultation, on accomplishing, what for a long time had been the object of their hopes, was unusually great.

While the British were retarded in their advance by the combined difficulties of nature and art, events took place, which proved the wisdom and propriety of the retreat from Ticonderoga. The army, saved by that means, was between the inhabitants and general Burgoyne. This abated the

panic of the people, and became a centre of rendezvous for them to repair to. On the other hand, had they stood their ground at Ticonderoga, they must, in the ordinary course of events, either have been cut to pieces, or surrendered themselves prisoners of war. In either case, as general St. Clair represented in his elegant defence: "Fear and dismay would have seized on the inhabitants from the false opinion that had been formed of the strength of these posts: wringing grief and moping melancholy, would have filled the habitations of those whose dearest connexions were in that army: and a lawless host of ruffians, set loose from every social principle, would have roamed at large through the defenceless country, while bands of savages would have carried havoc, devastation and terror before them. Great part of the state of New York must have submitted to the conqueror, and in it he would have found the means to prosecute his success. He would have been able effectually to have co-operated with general Howe, and would probably soon have been in the same country with him; that country where the illustrious Washington, with an inferior force, made so glorious a stand, but who must have been obliged to retire, if both armies had come upon him at once; or he might have been forced to a general and decisive action, in unfavourable circumstances, whereby the hopes, the now well-founded hopes of America, of liberty, peace and safety might have been cut off forever." Such, it was apprehended, would have been the consequences, if the American northern army had not retreated from their posts at Ticonderoga. Very different events took place.

In a few days after the evacuation, general Schuyler issued a proclamation, calling to the minds of the inhabitants the late barbarities and desolations of the royal army in Jersey; warning them that they would be dealt with as traitors, if they joined the British, and requiring them with their arms to repair to the American standard. Numerous parties were also employed in bringing off public stores, and in felling trees, and throwing obstructions in the way of the advancing royal army. At first, an universal panic intimidated the

inhabitants; but they soon recovered. The laws of self-preservation operated in their full force, and diffused a general activity through the adjacent states. The formalities of convening, drafting and officering the militia were in many instances dispensed with. Hundreds seized their firelocks, and marched on the general call, without waiting for the orders of their immediate commanders. The inhabitants had no means of security, but to abandon their habitations, and take up arms. Every individual saw the necessity of becoming a temporary soldier. The terror excited by the Indians, instead of disposing the inhabitants to court British protection, had a contrary effect. The friends of the royal cause, as well as its enemies, suffered from their indiscriminate barbarities. Among other instances, the murder of Miss M'Crea excited an universal horror. This young lady, in the innocence of youth, and the bloom of beauty; the daughter of a steady loyalist, and engaged to be married to a British officer, was, on the very day of her intended nuptials, massacred by the savage auxiliaries, attached to the British army.\* Occasion was thereby given to inflame the populace, and to blacken the royal cause. The cruelties of the Indians, and the cause in which they were engaged, were associated together, and presented in one view to the alarmed inhabitants. They, whose interest it was to draw forth the militia in support of American independence, strongly expressed their execrations of the army, which submitted to accept of Indian aid: and they loudly condemned that government

\* This, though true, was no premeditated barbarity. The circumstances were as follow: Mr. Jones, her lover, from an anxiety for her safety, engaged some Indians to remove her from among the Americans, and promised to reward the person who should bring her safe to him, with a barrel of rum. Two of the Indians, who had conveyed her some distance, on the way to her intended husband, disputed, which of them should present her to Mr. Jones. Both were anxious for the reward. One of them killed her with his tomahawk, to prevent the other from receiving it. Burgoyne obliged the Indians to deliver up the murderer, and threatened to put him to death. His life was only spared, upon the Indians agreeing to terms, which the general thought would be more efficacious than an execution, in preventing similar mischiefs.



which could call such auxiliaries as were calculated not to subdue, but to exterminate a people whom they affected to reclaim as subjects. Their cruel mode of warfare, putting to death, as well the smiling infant and the defenceless female, as the resisting armed man, excited an universal spirit of resistance. In conjunction with other circumstances, it impressed on the minds of the inhabitants a general conviction that a vigorous determined opposition was the only alternative for the preservation of their property, their children and their wives. Could they have indulged the hope of security and protection while they remained peaceably at their homes, they would have found many excuses for declining to assume the profession of soldiers; but when they contrasted the dangers of a manly resistance, with those of a passive inaction, they chose the former, as the least of two unavoidable evils. All the feeble aid, which the royal army received from their Indian auxiliaries, was infinitely overbalanced by the odium it brought on their cause, and by that determined spirit of opposition which the dread of their savage cruelties excited. While danger was remote, the pressing calls of congress, and of the general officers, for the inhabitants to be in readiness to oppose a distant foe, were unavailing, or tardily executed; but no sooner had they recovered from the first impression of the general panic, than they turned out with unexampled alacrity. The owners of the soil came forward with that ardour, which the love of dear connexions, and of property inspires. An army was speedily poured forth from the woods and mountains. When they who had begun the retreat were nearly wasted away, the spirit of the country immediately supplied their place, with a much more formidable force. In addition to these incitements, it was early conjectured, that the royal army, by pushing forward would be so entangled as not to be able to advance or retreat on equal terms. Men of abilities and of eloquence, influenced with this expectation, harangued the inhabitants in their several towns, and set forth in high-colouring the cruelties of the savage auxiliaries of Great Britain, and the fair prospects of capturing the whole force of their enemies. From the combined influence

of these causes, the American army soon amounted to upwards of 13,000 men.

While Burgoyne was forcing his way down towards Albany, St. Leger was co-operating with him in the Mohawk country. He had ascended the river St. Lawrence, crossed lake Ontario, and commenced the siege of Fort Schuyler. On the approach of this detachment of the royal army, on the 3d of August, general Harkimer collected about 800 of the whig militia of the parts adjacent, for the relief of the garrison.

St. Leger, aware of the consequences of being attacked in his trenches, detached sir John Johnson, with some Tories and Indians, to lie in ambush, and intercept the advancing militia. The stratagem took effect. The general and his militia were surprised; but several of the Indians were nevertheless killed by their fire. A scene of confusion followed. Some of Harkimer's men ran off; but others posted themselves behind logs, and continued to fight with bravery and success. The loss on the side of the Americans was 160 killed, besides the wounded. Among the former was their gallant leader, general Harkimer. Several of their killed and wounded were principal inhabitants of that part of the country. Colonel St. Leger availed himself of the terror excited on this occasion, and endeavoured by strong representations of Indian barbarity, to intimidate the garrison into an immediate surrender. He sent verbal and written messages, "demanding the surrender of the fort, and stating the impossibility of their obtaining relief, as their friends under general Harkimer were entirely cut off, and as general Burgoyne had forced his way through the country, and was daily receiving the submission of the inhabitants." He represented "the pains he had taken to soften the Indians, and to obtain engagements from them, that in case of an immediate surrender every man in the garrison should be spared;" and particularly enlarged on the circumstance, "that the Indians were determined, in case of their meeting with further opposition, to massacre not only the garrison, but every man, woman or child in the Mohawk country." Colonel Gansevort, who commanded in the fort, replied, "that being by the United States entrusted with

the charge of the garrison, he was determined to defend it to the last extremity, against all enemies whatever, without any concern for the consequences of doing his duty."

It being resolved, maugre the threats of Indian barbarities, to defend the fort, lieutenant colonel Willet undertook, in conjunction with lieutenant Stockwell, to give information to their fellow citizens, of the state of the garrison. These two adventurous officers passed by night through the besiegers works, and, at the hazard of falling into the hands of savages, and suffering from them the severity of torture, made their way for fifty miles through dangers and difficulties, in order to procure relief for their besieged associates. In the meantime, the British carried on their operations with such industry, that in less than three weeks they had advanced within 150 yards of the fort.

The brave garrison, in its hour of danger, was not forgotten. General Arnold, with a brigade of continental troops, had been previously detached by general Schuyler for their relief, and was then near at hand. Tost Schuyler, who had been taken up by the Americans, on suspicion of being a spy, was promised his life and his estate, on consideration that he should go on and alarm the Indians, with such representations of the numbers marching against them, as would occasion their retreat. He immediately proceeded to the camp of the Indians, and, being able to converse in their own language, informed them that vast numbers of hostile Americans were near at hand. They were thoroughly frightened and determined to go off. St. Leger used every art to retain them; but nothing could change their determination. It is the characteristic of these people on a reverse of fortune to betray irresolution, and a total want of that constancy, which is necessary to struggle with difficulties. They had found the fort stronger and better defended than was expected. They had lost several head men in their engagement with general Harkimer, and had gotten no plunder. These circumstances, added to the certainty of the approach of a reinforcement to their adversaries, which they believed to be much greater than it really was, made them quite untractable.

Part of them instantly decamped, and the remainder threatened to follow, if the British did not immediately retreat. This measure was adopted, and the siege raised. From the disorder, occasioned by the precipitancy of the Indians, the tents, and much of the artillery and stores of the besiegers, fell into the hands of the garrison. The discontented savages, exasperated by their ill fortune, are said, on their retreat, to have robbed their British associates, of their baggage and provisions.

While the fate of Fort Schuyler was in suspense, it occurred to general Burgoyne, on hearing of its being besieged, that a sudden and rapid movement forward would be of the utmost consequence. As the principal force of his adversaries was in front between him and Albany, he hoped by advancing on them, to reduce them to the necessity of fighting, or of retreating out of his way to New England. Had they, to avoid an attack, retreated up the Mohawk river, they would, in case of St. Leger's success, have put themselves between two fires. Had they retreated to Albany, it was supposed their situation would have been worse, as a co-operation from New York was expected. Besides, in case of that movement, an opportunity would have been given for a junction of Burgoyne and St. Leger. To have retired from the scene of action by filing off for New England, seemed to be the only opening left for their escape. With such views, general Burgoyne promised himself great advantages, from advancing rapidly towards Albany. The principal objection, against this project, was the difficulty of furnishing provisions to his troops. To keep up a communication with Fort George, so as to obtain from that garrison, regular supplies, at a distance daily increasing, was wholly impracticable. The advantages, which were expected from the proposed measure, were too dazzling to be easily relinquished. Though the impossibility of drawing provisions from the stores in their rear was known and acknowledged, yet a hope was indulged that they might be elsewhere obtained. A plan was therefore formed to open resources, from the plentiful farms of Vermont. Every day's account, and particularly the in-



formation of colonel Skene, induced Burgoyne to believe, that one description of the inhabitants in that country were panic struck, and that another, and by far the most numerous, were friends to the British interest, and only wanted the appearance of a protecting power to show themselves. Relying on this intelligence, he detached 500 men, 100 Indians, and two field pieces, which he supposed would be fully sufficient for the expedition. The command of this force was given to lieutenant colonel Baum; and it was supposed that with it he would be enabled to seize upon a magazine of supplies which the Americans had collected at Bennington, and which was only guarded by militia. It was also intended to try the temper of the inhabitants, and to mount the dragoons. Lieutenant colonel Baum was instructed to keep the regular force posted, while the light troops felt their way; and to avoid all danger of being surrounded, or of having his retreat cut off. But he proceeded with less caution than his perilous situation required. Confiding in the numbers and promised aid of those who were depended upon as friends, he presumed too much. On approaching the place of his destination, he found the American militia stronger than had been supposed. He therefore took post in the vicinity, intrenched his party, and despatched an express to general Burgoyne, with an account of his situation. Colonel Breyman was detached to reinforce him. Though every exertion was made to push forward this reinforcement, yet from the impracticable face of the country and defective means of transportation, 32 hours elapsed before they had marched 24 miles. General Starke, who commanded the American militia at Bennington, attacked colonel Baum, before the junction of the two royal detachments could be effected. On this occasion, about 800 undisciplined militia, without bayonets, or a single piece of artillery, attacked and routed 500 regular troops, advantageously posted behind intrenchments, furnished with the best arms, and defended with two pieces of artillery. The field pieces were taken from the party commanded by colonel Baum, and the greatest part of his detachment was either killed or captured. Colonel Breyman arrived on the

same ground, and on the same day; but not till the action was over. Instead of meeting his friends, as he expected, he found himself briskly attacked. This was begun by colonel Warner, who with his continental regiment, which having been sent for at Manchester, came opportunely at this time, and was well supported by Starke's militia, which had just defeated the party commanded by colonel Baun. Breyman's troops, though fatigued with their preceding march, behaved with great resolution; but were at length compelled to abandon their artillery, and retreat. In these two actions, the Americans took four brass field pieces, twelve brass drums, 250 dragoon swords, 4 ammunition waggons, and about 700 prisoners. The loss of the Americans, inclusive of their wounded, was about 100 men. Congress resolved, "that their thanks be presented to general Starke, of the New Hampshire militia, and the officers and troops under his command, for their brave and successful attack upon, and signal victory over, the enemy in their lines at Bennington, and also, that brigadier Starke be appointed a brigadier general in the army of the United States."\* Never were thanks more deservedly bestowed. The overthrow of these detachments was the first link in a grand chain of events, which finally drew down ruin on the whole royal army. The confidence with which the Americans were inspired, on finding themselves able to defeat regular troops, produced surprising effects. It animated their exertions, and filled them with expectation of further successes.

\* In an arrangement of general officers, made by congress, in the preceding year, a junior officer had been promoted, while Starke was neglected. He had written to congress on this subject, and his letters were laid on the table. He quitted the army, and retired to his farm: but on the approach of Burgoyne accepted a brigadier's commission and a separate command from New Hampshire. As their officer, he achieved this victory, and transmitted an official account of it to the executive of that state. Congress, hearing of it, inquired, why they were uninformed on the subject? Starke answered, that his correspondence with their body was closed, as they had not attended to his last letters. They took the hint, and promoted him. Starke was too much of a patriot to refuse his services, though his military feelings were hurt; and congress was too wise to stand on etiquette, when their country's interest was at stake.

That military pride, which is the soul of an army, was nurtured by the captured artillery, and other trophies of victory. In proportion to the elevation of the Americans, was the depression of their adversaries. Accustomed to success, as they had been in the preceding part of the campaign, they felt unusual mortification from this unexpected check. Though it did not diminish their courage, it abated their confidence. It is not easy to enumerate all the disastrous consequences which resulted to the royal army, from the failure of their expedition to Bennington. These were so extensive, that their loss of men was the least considerable. It deranged every plan for pushing the advantages which had been previously obtained. Among other embarrassments, it reduced general Burgoyne to the alternative of halting, till he brought forward supplies from Fort George, or of advancing without them at the risk of being starved. The former being adopted, the royal army was detained from August 16th, to September 13th. This unavoidable delay gave time and opportunity for the Americans to collect in great numbers.

The defeat of lieutenant colonel Baum was the first event which, for a long time, had taken place, in favour of the American northern army. From December, 1775, it had experienced one misfortune, treading on the heels of another, and defeat succeeding defeat. Every movement had been either retreating or evacuating. The subsequent transactions present a remarkable contrast. Fortune, which previous to the battle of Bennington, had not for a moment quitted the British standard, seemed, after that event, totally to desert it, and go over to the opposite party.

After the evacuation of Ticonderoga, the Americans had fallen back from one place to another, till they at last fixed at Vanshaick's island. Soon after this retreating system was adopted, congress recalled their general officers, and put general Gates at the head of their northern army. His arrival, on the 19th of August, gave fresh vigour to the exertions of the inhabitants. The militia, flushed with their recent victory at Bennington, collected in great numbers to

his standard. They soon began to be animated with a hope of capturing the whole British army. A spirit of adventure burst forth in many different points of direction. While general Burgoyne was urging his preparations for advancing towards Albany, an enterprise was undertaken by general Lincoln to recover Ticonderoga, and the other posts in the rear of the royal army. He detached colonel Brown with 500 men to the landing at lake George. The colonel conducted his operations with so much address, that he surprised all the out-posts between the landing at the north end of lake George, and the body of the fortress at Ticonderoga. He also took Mount Defiance and Mount-Hope, the French lines, and a block-house, 200 batteaux, several gun boats, and an armed sloop, together with 290 prisoners, and at the same time released 100 Americans. His own loss was trifling. Colonels Brown and Johnson, the latter of whom had been detached with 500 men, to attempt Mount Independence, on examination found that the reduction of either that post or of Ticonderoga was beyond their ability. When the necessary stores, for thirty days subsistence, were brought forward from lake George, general Burgoyne gave up all communication with the magazines in his rear, and, on the 13th and 14th, crossed Hudson's river. This movement was the subject of much discussion. Some charged it on the impetuosity of the general, and alleged that it was premature, before he was sure of aid from the royal forces posted in New York; but he pleaded the peremptory orders of his superiors. The rapid advance of Burgoyne, and especially his passage of the North River, added much to the impracticability of his future retreat; and, in conjunction with subsequent events, made the total ruin of his army in a great degree unavoidable.

Burgoyne, after crossing the Hudson, advanced along its side, and in four days encamped on the heights, about two miles from Gates's camp; which was three miles above Stillwater. The Americans, elated with their successes at Bennington and Fort Schuyler, thought no more of retreating, but came out to meet the advancing British, and engaged.



them with firmness and resolution. The attack began a little before mid-day, September 19th, between the scouting parties of the two armies. The commanders on both sides supported and reinforced their respective parties. The conflict, though severe, was only partial for an hour and a half; but after a short pause, it became general, and continued for three hours without any intermission. A constant blaze of fire was kept up, and both armies seemed to be determined on death or victory. The Americans and British alternately drove, and were driven by each other. Men, and particularly officers, dropped every moment, and on every side. Several of the Americans placed themselves in high trees, and, as often as they could distinguish an officer's uniform, took him off by deliberately aiming at his person. Few actions have been characterised by more obstinacy in attack or defence. The British repeatedly tried their bayonets, but without their usual success in the use of that weapon. At length, night put an end to the effusion of blood. The British lost upwards of 500 men, including their killed, wounded and prisoners. The Americans, inclusive of the missing, lost 319. Thirty-six out of forty-eight British matrosses were killed, or wounded. The 62d British regiment, which was 500 strong, when it left Canada, was reduced to 60 men, and 4 or 5 officers. This hard fought battle decided nothing; and little else than honour was gained by either army; but nevertheless it was followed by important consequences. Of these, one was the diminution of the zeal and alacrity of the Indians in the British army. The dangerous service, in which they were engaged, was by no means suited to their habits of war. They were disappointed of the plunder they expected, and saw nothing before them but hardships and danger. Fidelity and honour were too feeble motives in the minds of savages, to retain them in such an unproductive service. By deserting in the season when their aid would have been most useful, they furnished a second instance of the impolicy of depending upon them. Very little more perseverance was exhibited by the Canadians, and other British provincials. They also abandoned the British standard, when they found, that, instead

of a flying and dispirited enemy, they had a numerous and resolute force opposed to them. These desertions were not the only disappointments which general Burgoyne experienced. From the commencement of the expedition, he had promised himself a strong reinforcement from that part of the British army, which was stationed at New York. He depended on its being able to force its way to Albany, and to join him there, or in the vicinity. This co-operation, though attempted, failed in the execution, while the expectation of it contributed to involve him in some difficulties, to which he would not otherwise have been exposed.

General Burgoyne, on the 21st of September, received intelligence in a cypher, that sir Henry Clinton, who then commanded in New York, intended to make a diversion in his favour, by attacking the fortresses which the Americans had erected on Hudson's river, to obstruct the intercourse between New York and Albany. In answer to this communication, he despatched to sir Henry Clinton some trusty persons, with a full account of his situation, and with instructions to press the immediate execution of the proposed co-operation, and to assure him, that he was enabled in point of provisions, and fixed in his resolution, to hold his present position till the 12th of October, in the hopes of favourable events. The reasonable expectation of a diversion from New York, founded on this intelligence, made it disgraceful to retreat, and at the same time improper to urge offensive operations. In this posture of affairs, a delay of two or three weeks, in expectation of the promised co-operation from New York, became necessary. In the meantime, the provisions of the royal army were lessening, and the animation and numbers of the American army increasing. The New England people were fully sensible, that their all was at stake, and at the same time sanguine, that, by vigorous exertions, Burgoyne would be so entangled, that his surrender would be unavoidable. Every moment made the situation of the British more critical. From the uncertainty of receiving further supplies, general Burgoyne on the 1st of October lessened the soldiers provisions. The 12th of October, the term till which the royal army had

agreed to wait for aid from New York, was fast approaching, and no intelligence of the expected co-operation had arrived. In this alarming situation, it was thought proper to make a movement to the left of the Americans. The body of troops employed for this purpose, consisted of 1500 chosen men, and was commanded by generals Burgoyne, Philips, Reidesel, and Frazer. As they advanced, they were checked by a sudden and impetuous attack; but major Ackland, at the head of the British grenadiers, sustained it with great firmness. The Americans extended their attack along the whole front of the German troops, who were posted on the right of the grenadiers; and they also marched a large body round their flank, in order to cut off their retreat. To oppose this bold enterprise, the British light infantry, with a part of the 24th regiment, were directed to form a second line, and to cover the retreat of the troops into the camp. In the meantime, the Americans pushed forward a fresh and a strong reinforcement, to renew the action on Burgoyne's left. That part of his army was obliged to give way; but the light infantry, and 24th regiment, by a quick movement, came to its succour, and saved it from total ruin. The British lines being exposed to great danger, the troops which were nearest to them, returned for their defence. General Arnold, with a brigade of continental troops, pushed for the works, possessed by lord Balcarras, at the head of the British light infantry; but the brigade, having an abbatis to cross, and many other obstructions to surmount, was compelled to retire. Arnold left this brigade, and came to Jackson's regiment, which he ordered instantly to advance, and attack the lines and redoubt in their front, which were defended by lieutenant colonel Breyman at the head of the German grenadiers. The assailants pushed on with rapidity, and carried the works. Arnold was one of the first who entered them. Lieutenant colonel Breyman was killed. The troops commanded by him retired firing. They gained their tents about 30 or 40 yards from their works: but on finding that the assault was general, they gave one fire, after which some retreated to the British camp, but

others threw down their arms. The night put an end to the action.

This day was fatal to many brave men. The British officers suffered more than their common proportion. Among their slain, general Frazer, on account of his distinguished merit, was the subject of particular regret. Sir James Clark, Burgoyne's aid-de-camp, was mortally wounded. The general himself had a narrow escape: a shot passed through his hat, and another through his waistcoat. Majors Williams and Ackland were taken: the latter was wounded. The loss of the Americans was inconsiderable. General Arnold, to whose impetuosity they were much indebted for the success of the day, was among their wounded. They took more than 200 prisoners, besides 9 pieces of brass artillery, and the encampment of a German brigade, with all their equipage.

The royal troops were under arms the whole of the next day, in expectation of another action; but nothing more than skirmishes took place. At this time, general Lincoln, when reconnoitring, received a dangerous wound: an event which was greatly regretted, as he possessed much of the esteem and confidence of the American army.

The position of the British army, after the action of the 7th, was so dangerous, that an immediate and total change became necessary. This hazardous measure was executed without loss or disorder. The British camp, with all its appurtenances, was removed in the course of a single night. The American general now saw a fair prospect of overcoming the army opposed to him, without exposing his own to the dangers of another battle. His measures were therefore principally calculated to cut off their retreat, and prevent their receiving any further supplies.

While general Burgoyne was pushing on towards Albany, an unsuccessful attempt to relieve him was made by the British commander in New York. For this purpose, October 5th, sir Henry Clinton conducted an expedition up Hudson's River. This consisted of about 3000 men, and was accompanied by a suitable naval force. After making many feints he



landed at Stoney Point, marched over the mountains to Fort Montgomery, and attacked the different redoubts. The garrison, commanded by governor Clinton, a brave and intelligent officer, made a gallant resistance: but as the post had been designed principally to prevent the passing of ships, the works on the land side were incomplete and untenable. When it began to grow dark, on the 6th, the British entered the fort with fixed bayonets. The loss on neither side was great. Governor Clinton, general James Clinton, and most of the officers and men effected their escape under cover of the thick smoke and darkness that suddenly prevailed.

The reduction of this post furnished the British with an opportunity for opening a passage up the North River; but instead of pushing forward to Burgoyne's encampment, or even to Albany, they spent several days in laying waste the adjacent country. The Americans destroyed Fort Constitution, and also set fire to two new frigates, and some other vessels. General Tryon at the same time destroyed a settlement called Continental Village, which contained barracks for 1500 men, besides many stores. Sir James Wallace with a flying squadron of light frigates, and general Vaughan with a detachment of land forces, continued on and near the river for several days, desolating the country near its margin. General Vaughan so completely burned Esopus, a fine flourishing village, that a single house was not left standing, though on his approach, the Americans had left the town without making any resistance. Charity would lead us to suppose that these devastations were designed to answer military purposes. Their authors might have hoped to divert the attention of general Gates, and thus indirectly relieve general Burgoyne; but if this were intended, the artifice did not take effect. The preservation of property was with the Americans only a secondary object. The capturing of Burgoyne promised such important consequences, that they would not suffer any other consideration to interfere with it. General Gates did not make a single movement that lessened the probability of effecting his grand purpose. He wrote an expostulatory letter to Vaughan, part of which was in the

following terms: "Is it thus your king's generals think to make converts to the royal cause? It is no less surprising than true, that the measures they adopt to serve their master, have a quite contrary effect. Their cruelty establishes the glorious act of independence upon the broad basis of the resentment of the people." Whether policy or revenge led to this devastation of property is uncertain; but it cannot admit of a doubt, that it was far from being the most effectual method of relieving Burgoyne.

The passage of the North River was made so practicable by the advantages gained on the 6th of October, that sir Henry Clinton, with his whole force, amounting to 3000 men, might not only have reached Albany, but general Gates's encampment, before the 12th, the day till which Burgoyne had agreed to wait for aid from New York. While the British were doing mischief to individuals, without serving the cause of their royal master, it seems as though they might, by pushing forward about 136 miles in six days, have brought Gates's army between two fires, at least twenty-four hours before Burgoyne's necessity compelled his submission to articles of capitulation. Why they neglected this opportunity of relieving their suffering brethren, about 36 miles to the northward of Albany, when they were only about 100 miles below it, has never yet been satisfactorily explained.

Gates posted 1400 men on the heights opposite the fords of Saratoga, and 2000 more in the rear, to prevent a retreat to Fort Edward, and 1500 at a ford higher up. Burgoyne, receiving intelligence of these movements, concluded that Gates meant to turn his right. This, if effected, would have entirely enclosed him. To avoid being hemmed in, he resolved on an immediate retreat to Saratoga. His hospital, with the sick and wounded, were necessarily left behind; but they were recommended to the humanity of general Gates, and received from him every indulgence their situation required. When general Burgoyne arrived at Saratoga, he found that the Americans had posted a considerable force on the opposite heights, to impede his passage at that ford. In order to prepare the way for a retreat to lake George,

Burgoyne ordered a detachment of artificers, with a strong escort of British and provincials, to repair the bridges, and open the road leading thither. Part of the escort was withdrawn on other duty: and the remainder, on a slight attack of an inconsiderable party of Americans, ran away. The workmen, thus left without support, were unable to effect the business on which they had been sent. The only practicable route of retreat, which now remained, was by a night march to Fort Edward. Before this attempt could be made, scouts returned with intelligence, that the Americans were intrenched opposite to those fords on the Hudson's river, over which it was proposed to pass, and that they were also in force on the high ground between Fort Edward and Fort George. They had at the same time parties down the whole shore, and posts so near as to observe every motion of the royal army. Their position extended nearly round the British, and was by the nature of the ground in a great measure secured from attacks. The royal army could not stand its ground where it was, from the want of the means necessary for subsistence; nor could it advance towards Albany, without attacking a force greatly superior in number; nor could it retreat without making good its way over a river, in the face of a strong party, advantageously posted on the opposite side. In case of either attempt, the Americans were so near as to discover every movement; and by means of their bridge could bring their whole force to operate.

Truly distressing was the condition of the royal army. Abandoned in the most critical moment by their Indian allies, unsupported by their brethren in New York, weakened by the timidity and desertion of the Canadians, worn down by a series of incessant efforts, and greatly reduced in their numbers by repeated battles, they were invested by an army nearly three times their number, without a possibility of retreat, or of replenishing their exhausted stock of provisions. A continual cannonade pervaded their camp, and rifle and grape shot fell in many parts of their lines. They nevertheless retained a great share of fortitude.

In the meantime, the American army was hourly increas-

ing. Volunteers came in from all quarters, eager to share in the glory of destroying or capturing those whom they considered as their most dangerous enemies. The 12th of October at length arrived. The day was spent in anxious expectation of its producing something of consequence. But as no prospect of assistance appeared, and their provisions were nearly expended, the hope of receiving any, in due time for their relief, could not be further indulged. General Burgoyne thought proper in the evening, to take an account of the provisions left. It was found on inquiry, that they would amount to no more than a scanty subsistence for three days. In this state of distress, a council of war was called, and it was made so general, as to comprehend both the field officers and the captains. Their unanimous opinion was, that their present situation justified a capitulation on honourable terms. A messenger was therefore despatched to begin this business. General Gates in the first instance demanded, that the royal army should surrender prisoners of war. He also proposed, that the British should ground their arms: but general Burgoyne replied, "This article is inadmissible in every extremity; sooner than this army will consent to ground their arms in their encampment, they will rush on the enemy, determined to take no quarters." After various messages, a convention was settled, by which it was substantially stipulated as follows: The troops under general Burgoyne, to march out of their camp with the honours of war, and the artillery of the intrenchments to the verge of the river, where the arms and artillery are to be left. The arms to be piled by word of command from their own officers. A free passage to be granted to the army under lieutenant general Burgoyne to Great Britain, upon condition of not serving again in North America during the present contest; and the port of Boston to be assigned for the entry of the transports to receive the troops, whenever general Howe shall so order. The army under lieutenant general Burgoyne to march to Massachusetts Bay, by the easiest route, and to be quartered in or near to Boston. The troops to be provided with provision by general Gates's orders, at the same rate of



rations as the troops of his own army. All officers to retain their carriages, bat-horses, and no baggage to be molested or searched. The officers not to be separated from their men. The officers to be quartered according to their rank. All corps whatever of lieutenant general Burgoyne's army, to be included in the above articles. All Canadians, and persons belonging to the Canadian establishment, and other followers of the army, to be permitted to return to Canada; to be conducted to the first British post on lake George; to be supplied with provisions as the other troops, and to be bound by the same condition of not serving during the present contest. Passports to be granted to three officers, to carry despatches to sir William Howe, sir Guy Carleton, and to Great Britain. The officers to be admitted on their parole, and to be permitted to wear their side arms.

Such were the embarrassments of the royal army, incapable of subsisting where it was, or of making its way to a better situation, that these terms were rather more favourable than they had a right to expect. On the other hand, it would not have been prudent for the American general at the head of an army, which, though numerous, consisted mostly of militia or new levies, to have provoked the despair of even an inferior number of brave, disciplined, regular troops. General Gates rightly judged, that the best way to secure his advantages was to use them with moderation. Soon after the convention was signed, the Americans marched into their lines, and were kept there till the royal army had deposited their arms at the place appointed. The delicacy, with which this business was conducted, reflected honour on the American general. Nor did the politeness of Gates end here. Every circumstance was withheld, that could constitute a triumph in the American army. The captive general was received by his conqueror with respect and kindness. A number of the principal officers of both armies met at general Gates's quarters, and for a while, seemed to forget, in social and convivial pleasures, that they had been enemies. The conduct of general Burgoyne in this interview with general Gates was truly dignified; and the historian is at a loss

whether to admire most, the magnanimity of the victorious, or the fortitude of the vanquished general.

The British troops partook liberally of the plenty that reigned in the American army. It was the more acceptable to them, as they were destitute of bread and flour, and had only as much meat left, as was sufficient for a day's subsistence.

By the convention which has been mentioned, 5790 men were surrendered prisoners. The sick and wounded left in camp, when the British retreated to Saratoga, together with the numbers of the British, German and Canadian troops, who were killed, wounded or taken, and who had deserted in the preceding part of the expedition, were reckoned to be 4689. The whole royal force, exclusive of Indians, was probably about 10,000. The stores, which the Americans acquired, were considerable. The captured artillery consisted of 35 brass field pieces. There were also 4647 muskets, and a variety of other useful and much wanted articles, which fell into their hands. The continentals in general Gates's army were 9093, the militia 4129; but of the former 2103 were sick or on furlough, and 562 of the latter were in the same situation. The number of militia was constantly fluctuating.

The general exultation of the Americans, on receiving the agreeable intelligence of the convention of Saratoga, disarmed them of much of their resentment. The burnings and devastations which had taken place were sufficient to have inflamed their minds: but private feelings were in a great measure absorbed by a consideration of the many advantages, which the capture of so large an army promised to the new-formed states.

In a short time after the convention was signed, general Gates moved forward to stop the devastations of the British on the North River; but on hearing of the fate of Burgoyne, Vaughan and Wallace retired to New York.

About the same time, the British, who had been left in the rear of the royal army, destroyed their cannon, and, abandoning Ticonderoga, retreated to Canada. The whole

country, after experiencing for several months the confusions of war, was in a moment restored to perfect tranquility.

Great was the grief and dejection in Britain, on receiving the intelligence of the fate of Burgoyne. The expedition committed to him had been undertaken with the most confident hopes of success. The quality of the troops he commanded, was such, that from their bravery, directed by his zeal, talents and courage, it was presumed that all the northern parts of the United States would be subdued before the end of the campaign. The good fortune, which for some time followed him, justified these expectations: but the catastrophe proved the folly of planning distant expeditions, and of projecting remote conquests.

The consequences of these great events vibrated round the world. The capture of Burgoyne was the hinge on which the revolution turned. While it encouraged the perseverance of the Americans, by well-grounded hopes of final success, it increased the embarrassments of that ministry, which had so ineffectually laboured to compel their submission. Opposition to their measures gathered new strength, and formed a stumbling block in the road to conquest. This prevented Great Britain from acting with that collected force, which an union of sentiments and councils would have enabled her to exert. Hitherto the best-informed Americans had doubts of success in establishing their independence: but henceforward their language was: "That whatever might be the event of their present struggle, they were forever lost to Great Britain." Nor were they deceived. The eclat, of capturing a large army of British and German regular troops, soon procured them powerful friends in Europe.

Immediately after the surrender, Burgoyne's troops were marched to the vicinity of Boston. On their arrival, they were quartered in the barracks on Winter and Prospect hills. The general court of Massachusetts passed proper resolutions for procuring suitable accommodations for the prisoners; but from the general unwillingness of the people to oblige them, and from the feebleness of that authority which the republican rulers had at that time over the property of their

fellow citizens, it was impossible to provide immediately for so large a number of officers and soldiers, in such a manner as their convenience required, or as from the articles of convention they might reasonably expect. The officers remonstrated to general Burgoyne, that six or seven of them were crowded together in one room, without any regard to their respective ranks, in violation of the seventh article of the convention. Burgoyne, on the 14th of November, forwarded this account to Gates, and added, "the public faith is broken." This letter, being laid before congress, gave an alarm. It corroborated an apprehension, previously entertained, that the captured troops, on their embarkation, would make a junction with the British garrisons in America. The declaration of the general, that "the public faith was broken," while in the power of congress, was considered by them as destroying the security which they before had in his personal honour; for in every event he might adduce his previous notice to justify his future conduct. They therefore resolved: "That the embarkation of lieutenant general Burgoyne, and the troops under his command, be postponed, till a distinct and explicit ratification of the convention of Saratoga be properly notified by the court of Great Britain to congress." Burgoyne explained the intention and construction of the passage objected to in his letter, and pledged himself, that his officers would join with him in signing any instrument that might be thought necessary for confirming the convention: but congress would not recede from their resolution. They alleged, that it had been often asserted by their adversaries, that "faith was not to be kept with rebels;" and that therefore they would be deficient in attention to the interests of their constituents, if they did not require an authentic ratification of the convention by national authority, before they parted with the captured troops. They urged further, that by the law of nations, a compact, broken in one article, was no longer binding in any other. They made a distinction between the suspension and abrogation of the convention, and alleged, that ground to suspect an intention to violate it, was a justifying reason for suspending its execu-



tion on their part, till it was properly ratified. The desired ratification, if Great Britain was seriously disposed to that measure, might have been obtained in a few months, and congress uniformly declared themselves willing to carry it into full effect, as soon as they were secured of its observance, by proper authority on the other side.

About eight months afterwards, certain royal commissioners, whose official functions shall be hereafter explained, made a requisition respecting these troops; offered to ratify the convention; and required permission for their embarkation. On inquiry, it was found, that they had no authority to do any thing in the matter, which would be obligatory on Great Britain. Congress therefore resolved, "that no ratification of the convention, which may be tendered in consequence of powers, which only reach that case by construction and implication, or which may subject whatever is transacted relative to it, to the future approbation or disapprobation of the parliament of Great Britain, can be accepted by congress."

Till the capture of Burgoyne, the powers of Europe were only spectators of the war between Great Britain and her late colonies: but, soon after that event, they were drawn in to be parties. In every period of the controversy, the claims of the Americans were patronised by sundry respectable foreigners. The letters, addresses, and other public acts of congress were admired by many who had no personal interest in the contest. Liberty is so evidently the undoubted right of mankind, that even they who never possessed it feel the propriety of contending for it; and whenever a people take up arms, either to defend or to recover it, they are sure of meeting with encouragement or good wishes from the friends of humanity in every part of the world.

From the operation of these principles, the Americans had the esteem and good wishes of multitudes in all parts of Europe. They were reputed to be ill used, and were represented as a resolute and brave people, determined to resist oppression. Being both pitied and applauded, generous and sympathetic sentiments were excited in their favour. These

circumstances would have operated in every case; but in the present, the cause of the Americans was patronised from additional motives. An universal jealousy prevailed against Great Britain. Her navy had long tyrannised over the nations of Europe, and demanded, as a matter of right, that the ships of all other powers should strike their sails to her, as mistress of the ocean. From her eagerness to prevent supplies going to her rebellious colonists, as she called the Americans, the vessels of foreign powers had for some time past been subjected to searches and other interruptions, when steering towards America, in a manner that could not but be impatiently borne by independent nations. That pride and insolence which brought on the American war, had long disgusted her neighbours, and made them rejoice at her misfortunes, and especially at the prospect of dismembering her overgrown empire.

## CHAPTER XV.

*The Alliance between France and the United States. The Campaign of 1778.*

SOON after intelligence of the capture of Burgoyne's army reached Europe, the court of France concluded, at Paris, treaties of alliance and commerce with the 1778 United States. The circumstances, which led to this great event, deserve to be particularly unfolded. The colonists having taken up arms, uninfluenced by the enemies of Great Britain, conducted their opposition for several months after they had raised troops, and emitted money, without any reference to foreign powers. They knew it to be the interest of Europe, to promote a separation between Great Britain and her colonies; but as they began the contest with no other view than to obtain a redress of grievances, they neither wished, in the first period of their opposition, to involve Great Britain in a war, nor to procure aid to themselves by paying court to her enemies. The policy of Great Britain, in attempting to deprive the Americans of arms, was the first event which made it necessary for them to seek foreign connexions. At the time she was urging military preparations to compel their submission, she forbade the exportation of arms, and solicited the commercial powers of Europe to co-operate with her by adopting a similar prohibition. To frustrate the views of Great Britain, congress, besides recommending the domestic manufacture of the materials for military stores, appointed a secret committee, with powers to procure on their account arms and ammunition, and also employed agents in foreign countries for the same purpose. The evident advantage, which France might derive from the continuance of the dispute, and the countenance which individuals of that country daily gave to the Americans, encouraged congress to send a political and commercial agent

to that kingdom, with instructions to solicit its friendship, and to procure military stores. Silas Deane, being  
1776 chosen for this purpose, sailed for France early in 1776, and was soon after his arrival at Paris instructed to sound count de Vergennes, the French minister for foreign affairs, on the subject of the American controversy. As the public mind, for reasons which have been mentioned, closed against Great Britain, it opened towards other nations.

On the 11th of June, congress appointed a committee, to prepare a plan of a treaty to be proposed to foreign powers. The discussion of this novel subject engaged their attention till the latter end of September. While congress was deliberating thereon, Mr. Deane was soliciting a supply of arms, ammunition, and soldiers' cloathing for their service. A sufficiency for lading three vessels was soon procured. What agency the government of France had in furnishing these supplies, or whether they were sold, or given as presents, are questions which have been often asked, but not satisfactorily answered; for the business was so conducted that the transaction might be made to assume a variety of complexions, as circumstances might render expedient.

It was most evidently the interest of France to encourage the Americans, in their opposition to Great Britain; and it was true policy to do this by degrees, and in a private manner, lest Great Britain might take the alarm. Individuals are sometimes influenced by considerations of friendship and generosity; but interest is the pole star by which nations are universally governed. It is certain that Great Britain was amused with declarations of the most pacific dispositions on the part of France, at the time the Americans were liberally supplied with the means of defence; and it is equally certain, that this was the true line of policy for promoting that dismemberment of the British empire, which France had an interest in accomplishing.

Congress knew, that a diminution of the overgrown power of Britain, could not but be desirable to France. Sore with the loss of her possessions on the continent of North Ame-



rica, by the peace of Paris in 1763, and also by the capture of many thousands of her sailors in 1755, antecedent to a declaration of war, she must have been something more than human, not to have rejoiced at an opportunity of depressing an ancient and formidable rival. Besides the increasing naval superiority of Great Britain, her vast resources, not only in her ancient dominions, but in colonies growing daily in numbers and wealth, added to the haughtiness of her flag, made her the object both of terror and envy. It was the interest of congress to apply to the court of France, and it was the interest of France to listen to their application.

Congress, having agreed on the plan of the treaty, which they intended to propose to his Most Christian Majesty, proceeded to elect commissioners to solicit its acceptance. Dr. Franklin, Silas Deane, and Thomas Jefferson were chosen. The latter declining to serve, Arthur Lee, who was then in London, and had been very servicable to his country, in a variety of ways, was elected in his room. It was resolved, that no member should be at liberty to divulge any thing more of these transactions than, "that congress had taken such steps as they judged necessary for obtaining foreign alliances." The secret committee were directed to make an effectual lodgement in France, of ten thousand pounds sterling, subject to the order of these commissioners. Dr. Franklin, who was employed as agent in the business, and afterwards as minister plenipotentiary at the court of France, was in possession of a greater proportion of foreign fame, than any other native of America. By the dint of superior abilities, and with but few advantages in early life, he had attained the highest eminence among men of learning, and in many instances extended the empire of science. His genius was vast and comprehensive, and with equal ease investigated the mysteries of philosophy, and the labyrinths of politics. His fame as a philosopher had reached as far as human nature is polished or refined. His philanthropy knew no bounds. The prosperity and happiness of the human race were objects which at all times had attracted his attention. Disgusted with Great Britain, and glowing with the most

ardent love for the liberties of his oppressed native country, he left London, where he had resided some years in the character of agent for several of the colonies, early in 1775; returned to Philadelphia; and immediately afterwards was elected by the legislature of Pennsylvania, a member of congress. Shortly after his appointment, to solicit the interests of the United States in France, he sailed for that country on the 27th of October, 1776. He was no sooner landed than universally caressed. His fame had smoothed the way for his reception in a public character. Doctor Franklin, Silas Deane, and Arthur Lee, having rendezvoused at Paris, soon after opened their business in a private audience with count de Vergennes. The congress could not have applied to the court of France under more favourable circumstances. The throne was filled by a prince in the flower of his age, and animated with the desire of rendering his reign illustrious. Count de Vergennes was not less remarkable for extensive political knowledge, than for true greatness of mind. He had grown old in the habits of government, and was convinced that conquests are neither the surest nor the shortest way to substantial fame. He knew full well that no success in war, however brilliant, could so effectually promote the security of France, as the emancipation of the colonies of her ancient rival. He had the superior wisdom to discern, that there were no present advantages to be obtained by unequal terms, that would compensate for those lasting benefits which were likely to flow from a kind and generous beginning. Instead of grasping at too much, or taking any advantages of the humble situation of the invaded colonies, he aimed at nothing more than, by kind and generous terms to a distressed country, to perpetuate the separation which had already taken place between the component parts of an empire, from the union of which his sovereign had much to fear.

Truly difficult was the line of conduct, which the real interest of the nation required of the ministers of his Most Christian Majesty. An haughty reserve would have discouraged the Americans. An open reception, or even a legal countenance of their deputies might have alarmed the rulers of

Great Britain, and disposed them to a compromise with their colonies, or have brought on an immediate rupture between France and England. A middle line, as preferable to either, was therefore pursued. Whilst the French government prohibited, threatened, and even punished the 1777 Americans; private persons encouraged, supplied, and supported them. Prudence, as well as policy required, that France should not be over-hasty, in openly espousing their cause. She was by no means fit for war. From the state of her navy, and the condition of her foreign trade, she was vulnerable on every side. Her trading people dreaded the thoughts of a war with Great Britain, as they would thereby be exposed to great losses. These considerations were strengthened from another quarter. The peace of Europe was supposed to be unstable, from a prevailing belief, that the speedy death of the elector of Bavaria was an event extremely probable. But the principal reason which induced a delay, was an opinion that the dispute between the mother country and the colonies would be compromised. Within the thirteen years immediately preceding, twice had the contested claims of the two countries brought matters to the verge of extremity. Twice had the guardian genius of both interposed, and reunited them in the bonds of love and affection. It was feared by the sagacious ministry of France, that the present rupture would terminate in the same manner. These wise observers of human nature apprehended, that their too early interference would favour a reconciliation, and that the reconciled parties would direct their united force against the French, as the disturbers of their domestic tranquillity. It had not yet entered into the hearts of the French nation, that it was possible for the British American colonists, to join with their ancient enemies against their late friends.

At this period, congress did not so much expect any direct aid from France, as the indirect relief of a war between that country and Great Britain. To subserve this design, they resolved that, "their commissioners at the court of France should be furnished with warrants and commissions, and

authorised to arm and fit for war in the French ports, any number of vessels, not exceeding six, at the expense of the United States, to war upon British property; provided they were satisfied this measure would not be disagreeable to the court of France." This resolution was carried into effect: and in the year 1777, marine officers, with American commissions, both sailed out of French ports, and carried prizes of British property into them. They could not procure their condemnation in the courts of France, nor sell them publicly: but they nevertheless found ways and means to turn them into money. The commanders of these vessels were sometimes punished by authority, to please the English; but they were oftener caressed from another quarter to please the Americans.

While private agents on the part of the United States were endeavouring to embroil the two nations, the American commissioners were urging the ministers of his Most Christian Majesty to accept the treaty proposed by congress. They received assurances of the good wishes of the court of France; but were from time to time informed, that the important transactions required further consideration, and were enjoined to observe the most profound secrecy. Matters remained in this fluctuating state from December 1776, till December 1777. Private encouragement and public discountenance were alternated; but both varied according to the complexion of news from America. The defeat on Long Island, the reduction of New York, and the train of disastrous events in 1776, which have already been mentioned, sunk the credit of the Americans very low, and abated much of the national ardour for their support. Their subsequent successes at Trenton and Princeton effaced these impressions, and rekindled active zeal in their behalf. The capture of Burgoyne fixed these wavering politics. The success of the Americans in the campaign of 1777, placed them on high ground. Their enmity had proved itself formidable to Britain, and their friendship became desirable to France. Having helped themselves, they found it less difficult to obtain help from others. The same interest, which hitherto had



directed the court of France to a temporising policy, now required decisive conduct. Previous delay had favoured the dismemberment of the empire; but further procrastination bid fair to promote at least such a federal alliance of the disjointed parts of the British empire, as would be no less hostile to the interests of France, than a re-union of its several parts. The news of the capitulation of Saratoga reached France, very early in December, 1777. The American deputies took that opportunity to press for an acceptance of the treaty, which had been under consideration for the preceding twelve months. The capture of Burgoyne's army convinced the French, that the opposition of the Americans to Great Britain was not the work of a few men who had gotten power in their hands, but of the great body of the people; and was like to be finally successful. It was therefore determined to take them by the hand, and publicly to espouse their cause. The commissioners of congress were informed by Mr. Gerard, one of the secretaries of the king's council of state, "that it was decided to acknowledge the independence of the United States, and to make a treaty with them; that in the treaty no advantage would be taken of their situation, to obtain terms which, otherwise, it would not be convenient for them to agree to; that his Most Christian Majesty desired the treaty once made should be durable, and their amity to subsist forever, which could not be expected, if each nation did not find an interest in its continuance, as well as in its commencement. It was therefore intended that the terms of the treaty should be such as the new-formed states would be willing to agree to, if they had been long since established, and in the fullness of strength and power, and such as they should approve of when that time should come; that his Most Christian Majesty was fixed in his determination not only to acknowledge, but to support their independence; that in doing this he might probably soon be engaged in a war; yet he should not expect any compensation from the United States on that account; nor was it pretended that he acted wholly for their sakes, since besides his real good will to them, it was manifestly the interest of France, that the power of England should be

diminished, by the separation of the colonies from its government. The only condition he should require and rely on, would be, that the United States in no peace to be made, should give up their independence and return to the obedience of the British government." At any time previously to the 16th of December, 1777, when Mr. Gerard made the foregoing declaration, it was in the power of the British ministry to have ended the American war, and to have established an alliance with the United States, that would have been of great service to both; but from the same haughtiness which for some time had predominated in their councils, and blinded them to their interests, they neglected to improve the favourable opportunity.

Conformably to the preliminaries proposed by Mr. Gerard, his Most Christian Majesty Louis the 16th, on the 6th of February, entered into treaties of amity, commerce, 1778 and alliance with the United States, on the footing of the most perfect equality and reciprocity. By the latter of these, that illustrious monarch became the guarantee of their sovereignty, independence and commerce.

On a review of the conduct of the French ministry to the Americans, the former appear to have acted uniformly from a wise regard to national interest. Any line of conduct, different from that which they adopted, might have upset the measures which they wished to establish. Had they pretended to act from disinterested principles of generosity to the distressed, the known selfishness of human nature would have contradicted the extravagant pretension. By avowing the real motive of their conduct, they furnished such a proof of candour as begat confidence.

The terms of reciprocity, on which they contracted with the United States, were no less recommended by wise policy than dictated by true magnanimity. As there was nothing exclusive in the treaty, an opening was left for Great Britain to close the war when she pleased, with all the advantages for future commerce that France had stipulated for herself. This judicious measure made the establishment of American independence the common cause of all the commercial powers

of Europe ; for the question then was, whether the trade of the United States should, by the subversion of their independence, be again monopolised by Great Britain, or, by the establishment of it, laid open on equal terms to all the world.

In national events, the public attention is generally fixed on the movements of armies and fleets. Mankind never fail to do homage to the able general, and expert admiral. To this they are justly entitled : but as great a tribute is due to the statesman, who, from a more elevated station, determines on measures in which the general safety and welfare of empires are involved. This glory, in a particular manner belongs to the count de Vergennes, who, as his Most Christian Majesty's minister for foreign affairs, conducted the conferences which terminated in these treaties. While the ministers of his Britannic Majesty were pleasing themselves with the flattering idea of permanent peace in Europe, they were not less surprised than provoked by hearing of the alliance, which had taken place between his Most Christian Majesty and the United States. This event, though often foretold, was disbelieved. The zeal of the British ministry, to reduce the colonies, blinded them to danger from every other quarter. Forgetting that interest governs public bodies, perhaps more than private persons, they supposed that feebleness would outweigh its all-commanding influence. Intent on carrying into execution the object of their wishes, they fancied that, because France and Spain had colonies of their own, they would refrain from aiding or abetting the revolted British colonies, from the fear of establishing a precedent, which at a future day might operate against themselves. Transported with indignation against their late fellow subjects, they were so infatuated with the American war, as to suppose that trifling evils, both distant and uncertain, would induce the court of France to neglect an opportunity of securing great and immediate advantages.

How far this interference of the court of France can be justified by the laws of nations, it is not the province of history to decide. Measures of this kind are not determined

by abstract reasoning. The present feelings of a nation, and the probable consequences of loss or gain, influence more than the decisions of speculative men. Suffice it to mention, that the French exculpated themselves from the heavy charges brought against them, by this summary mode of reasoning: "We have found," said they, "the late colonies of Great Britain in actual possession of independence, and in the exercise of the prerogatives of sovereignty. It is not our business to inquire, whether they had, or had not, sufficient reason to withdraw themselves from the government of Great Britain, and to erect an independent one of their own. We are to conduct towards nations, agreeably to the political state in which we find them, without investigating how they acquired it. Observing them to be independent in fact, we were bound to suppose they were so of right, and had the same liberty to make treaties with them, as with any other sovereign power." They also alleged, that Great Britain could not complain of their interference, since she had set them the example only a few years before, in supporting the Corsicans in opposition to the court of France. They had besides many well-founded complaints against the British, whose armed vessels had for months past harassed their commerce, on the idea of preventing an illicit trade with the revolted colonies.

The marquis de la Fayette, whose letters to France had a considerable share in preparing the nation to patronise the United States, was among the first in the American army who received the welcome tidings of the treaty. In a transport of joy, mingled with an effusion of tears, he embraced general Washington, exclaiming, "the king my master has acknowledged your independence, and entered into an alliance with you for its establishment." The heart-felt joy, which spread from breast to breast, exceeded description. The several brigades assembled by order of the commander in chief. Their chaplains offered up public thanks to Almighty God, and delivered discourses suitable to the occasion. A feu-de-joie was fired, and, on a proper signal being given, the air resounded with huzzas. "Long live the king



of France," poured forth from the breast of every private in the army. The Americans, having in their own strength for three years weathered the storms of war, fancied the port of peace to be in full view. Replete with the sanguine hopes of vigorous youth, they presumed that Britain, whose northern army had been reduced by their sole exertions, would not continue the unequal contest with the combined force of France and America. Overvaluing their own importance, and undervaluing the resources of their adversaries, they were tempted to indulge a dangerous confidence. That they might not be lulled into carelessness, congress made an animated address to them, in which, after reviewing the leading features of the war, they informed them: "They must yet expect a severe conflict; that though foreign alliances secured their independence, they could not secure their country from devastation."

The alliance between France and America had not been concluded three days, before it was known to the British ministry; and in less than five weeks more, March 13th, it was officially communicated to the court of London, in a rescript, delivered by the French ambassador, to lord Weymouth. In this new situation of affairs, there were some in Great Britain who advocated the measure of peace with America, on the footing of independence: but the point of honour, which had before precipitated the nation into the war, predominated over the voice of prudence and interest. The king and parliament of Great Britain resolved to punish the French nation for treating with their subjects, which they termed "an unprovoked aggression on the honour of the crown, and essential interests of the kingdom." And at the same time, a vain hope was indulged, that the alliance between France and the United States, which was supposed to have originated in passion, might be dissolved. The national prejudices against the French, had been so instilled into the minds of Englishmen, and of their American descendants, that it was supposed practicable, by negotiations and concessions, to detach the United States from their new alliance, and re-unite them to the parent state. Eleven days after the treaty between

France and America had been concluded, the British minister introduced into the house of commons a project for conciliation, founded on the idea of obtaining a re-union of the new states with Great Britain. This consisted of two bills, with the following titles: "A bill for declaring the intention of Great Britain, concerning the exercise of the right of imposing taxes within his majesty's colonies, provinces and plantations, in North America;" and a bill "to enable his majesty to appoint commissioners with sufficient powers, to treat, consult and agree upon the means of quieting the disorders now subsisting in certain of the colonies, plantations and provinces of North America." These bills were hurried through both houses of parliament, and before they passed into acts, were copied and sent across the Atlantic, to lord and general Howe. On their arrival in America, they were sent by a flag to congress at Yorktown. When they were received, congress was uninformed of the treaty which their commissioners had lately concluded at Paris. For upwards of a year, they had not received one line of information from them on any subject whatever. One packet had in that time been received: but all the letters therein were taken out, before it was put on board the vessel which brought it from France, and blank papers put in their stead. A committee of congress was appointed to examine these bills, and report on them. Their report was brought in the day following, and was unanimously adopted. By it they rejected the proposals of Great Britain. The vigorous and firm language in which congress expressed their rejection of these offers, considered in connexion with the circumstance of their being wholly ignorant of the late treaty with France, exhibits the glowing serenity of fortitude. While the royal commissioners were industriously circulating these bills in a partial and secret manner, as if they suspected an intention of concealing them from the common people, congress, trusting to the good sense of their constituents, ordered them to be forthwith printed for the public information. Having directed the affairs of their country with an honest reference to its welfare, they had nothing to fear from the people know-

ing and judging for themselves. 'They submitted the whole to the public. Their report, after some general remarks on the bill, concluded as follows:

“From all which it appears evident to your committee, that the said bills are intended to operate upon the hopes and fears of the good people of these states, so as to create divisions among them, and a defection from the common cause, now, by the blessing of Divine Providence, drawing near to a favourable issue; that they are the sequel of that insidious plan, which, from the days of the stamp-act, down to the present time, hath involved this country in contention and bloodshed: and that, as in other cases, so in this, although circumstances may force them at times to recede from their unjustifiable claims, there can be no doubt they will, as heretofore, upon the first favourable occasion, again display that lust of domination, which hath rent in twain the mighty empire of Britain.

“Upon the whole matter, the committee beg leave to report it as their opinion, that as the Americans united in this arduous contest upon principles of common interest, for the defence of common rights and privileges, which union hath been cemented by common calamities, and by mutual good offices and affection, so the great cause for which they contend, and in which all mankind are interested, must derive its success from the continuance of that union. Wherefore any man or body of men, who should presume to make any separate or partial convention or agreement with commissioners under the crown of Great Britain, or any of them, ought to be considered and treated as open and avowed enemies of these United States.

“And further, your committee beg leave to report it as their opinion, that these United States cannot, with propriety, hold any conference with any commissioners on the part of Great Britain, unless they shall, as a preliminary thereto, either withdraw their fleets and armies, or else, in positive and express terms, acknowledge the independence of the said states.

“And inasmuch as it appears to be the design of the ene-

mies of these states to lull them into a fatal security ; to the end that they may act with a becoming weight and importance, it is the opinion of your committee, that the several states be called upon to use the most strenuous exertions, to have their respective quotas of continental troops in the field as soon as possible, and that all the militia of the said states be held in readiness to act, as occasion may require."

The conciliatory bills were speedily followed by royal commissioners, deputed to solicit their reception. Governor Johnstone, lord Carlisle and Mr. Eden, appointed on this business, attempted to open a negociation on the subject. They requested general Washington, on the 9th of June, to furnish a passport for their secretary, Dr. Ferguson, with a letter from them to congress; but this was refused, and the refusal was unanimously approved by congress. They then forwarded, in the usual channel of communication, a letter addressed, "to his Excellency Henry Laurens, the president, and other the members of congress," in which they communicated a copy of their commission, and of the acts of parliament, on which it was founded; and they offered to concur in every satisfactory and just arrangement towards the following among other purposes:—

To consent to a cessation of hostilities, both by sea and land.

To restore free intercourse; to revive mutual affection; and renew the common benefits of naturalization, through the several parts of this empire.

To extend every freedom to trade that our respective interests can require.

To agree that no military forces shall be kept up in the different states of North America, without the consent of the general congress, or particular assemblies.

To concur in measures calculated to discharge the debts of America, and to raise the credit and value of the paper circulation.

To perpetuate our union by a reciprocal deputation of an agent or agents from the different states, who shall have the privilege of a seat and voice in the parliament of Great Bri-



tain; or if sent from Britain, in that case to have a seat and voice in the assemblies of the different states to which they may be deputed respectively, in order to attend the several interests of those by whom they are deputed.

In short, to establish the power of the respective legislatures in each particular state; to settle its revenue, its civil and military establishment; and to exercise a perfect freedom of legislation and internal government, so that the British states throughout North America, acting with us in peace and war under one common sovereign, may have the irrevocable enjoyment of every privilege, that is short of a total separation of interests, or consistent with that union of force, on which the safety of our common religion and liberty depends.

A decided negative having been already given, previous to the arrival of the British commissioners, to the overtures contained in the conciliatory bills, and intelligence of the treaty with France having in the meantime arrived, there was no ground left for further deliberation. President Laurens therefore, by order of congress, on the 17th of June, returned the following answer:

“ I have received the letter from your excellencies of the 9th instant, with the enclosures, and laid them before congress. Nothing but an earnest desire to spare the further effusion of human blood could have induced them to read a paper, containing expressions so disrespectful to his Most Christian Majesty, the good and great ally of these states; or to consider propositions so derogatory to the honour of an independent nation.

“ The acts of the British parliament, the commission from your sovereign, and your letter, supposed the people of these states to be subjects of the crown of Great Britain, and are founded on the idea of dependence, which is utterly inadmissible.

“ I am further directed to inform your excellencies, that congress are inclined to peace, notwithstanding the unjust claims from which this war originated, and the savage manner in which it hath been conducted. They will, therefore,

be ready to enter upon the consideration of a treaty of peace and commerce, not inconsistent with treaties already subsisting, when the king of Great Britain shall demonstrate a sincere disposition for that purpose. The only solid proof of this disposition will be, an explicit acknowledgment of the independence of these states, or the withdrawing his fleets and armies."

Though congress could not, consistently with national honour, enter on a discussion of the terms proposed by the British commissioners, yet some individuals of their body ably proved the propriety of rejecting them. Among these Gouverneur Morris and William Henry Drayton, with great force of argument and poignancy of wit, justified the decisive measures adopted by their countrymen.

As the British plan for conciliation was wholly founded on the idea of the states returning to their allegiance, it was no sooner known than rejected. In addition to the sacred ties of plighted faith and national engagements, the leaders in congress and the legislative assemblies of America had tasted the sweets of power, and were in full possession of its blessings, with a fair prospect of retaining them without any foreign control. The war, having originated on the part of Great Britain from a lust of power, had in its progress compelled the Americans in self-defence to assume and exercise its highest prerogatives. The passions of human nature, which induced the former to claim power, operated no less forcibly with the latter, against the relinquishment of it. After the colonies had declared themselves independent states, had repeatedly pledged their honour to abide by that declaration, had under the smiles of heaven maintained it for three campaigns without foreign aid, after the greatest monarch in Europe had entered into a treaty with them, and guaranteed their independence: after all this, to expect popular leaders, in the enjoyment of power, voluntarily to retire from the helm of government, to the languid indifference of private life, and while they violated national faith, at the same time to depress their country from the rank of sovereign states to that of dependent provinces, was not more re-

pugnant to universal experience, than to the governing principles of the human heart. The high-spirited ardour of citizens, in the youthful vigour of honour and dignity, did not so much as inquire, whether greater political happiness might be expected from closing with the proposals of Great Britain, or by adhering to their new allies. Honour forbade any balancing on the subject; nor were its dictates disobeyed. Though peace was desirable, and the offers of Great Britain so liberal that, if proposed in due time, they would have been acceptable; yet for the Americans, after they had declared themselves independent, and at their own solicitation obtained the aid of France, to desert their new allies, and leave them exposed to British resentment incurred on their account, would have argued a total want of honour and gratitude. The folly of Great Britain, in expecting such conduct from virtuous freemen, could only be exceeded by the baseness of America, had her citizens realised that expectation.

These offers of conciliation in a great measure originated in an opinion that the congress was supported by a faction, and that the great body of the people was hostile to independence, and well disposed to re-unite with Great Britain. The latter of these assertions was true, till a certain period of the contest; but that period was elapsed. With their new situation, new opinions and attachments had taken place. The political revolution of the government was less extraordinary than that of the style and manner of thinking in the United States. The independent American citizens saw with other eyes, and heard with other ears, than when they were in the condition of British subjects. That narrowness of sentiment, which prevailed in England towards France, no longer existed among the Americans. The British commissioners, unapprised of this real change in the public mind, expected to keep a hold on the citizens of the United States, by that illiberality which they inherited from their forefathers. Presuming that the love of peace, and the ancient national antipathy to France would counterbalance all other ties, they flattered themselves that, by perseverance, an impression

favourable to Great Britain might yet be made on the mind of America. They therefore renewed their efforts to open a negotiation with congress, in a letter of the 11th of July. As they had been informed, in answer to their preceding letter of the 10th of June, that an explicit acknowledgment of the independence of the United States, or a withdrawing of their fleets and armies, must precede an entrance on the consideration of a treaty of peace, and as neither branch of this alternative had been complied with, it was resolved by congress that no answer should be given to their reiterated application.

In addition to his public exertions as a commissioner, governor Johnstone endeavoured to obtain the objects on which he had been sent, by opening a private correspondence with some of the members of congress, and other Americans of influence. He in particular addressed himself by letter to Henry Laurens, Joseph Reed, and Robert Morris. His letter to Henry Laurens was in these words:

“DEAR SIR,

“I beg to transfer to my friend Dr. Ferguson, the private civilities which my friends Mr. Manning, and Mr. Oswald, request in my behalf. He is a man of the utmost probity, and of the highest esteem in the republic of letters.

“If you should follow the example of Britain, in the hour of her insolence, and send us back without a hearing, I shall hope, from private friendship, that I may be permitted to see the country, and the worthy characters she has exhibited to the world, upon making the request in any way you may point out.”

The following answer was immediately written:

“*York Town, June 14, 1778.*

“DEAR SIR,

“Yesterday, I was honoured with your favour of the 10th, and thank you for the transmission of those from my dear and worthy friends, Mr. Oswald and Mr. Manning. Had Dr.



Ferguson been the bearer of these papers, I should have shewn that gentleman every degree of respect and attention, that times and circumstances admit of.

“It is, sir, for Great Britain to determine, whether her commissioners shall return unheard by the representatives of the United States, or revive a friendship with the citizens at large, and remain among us as long as they please.

“You are undoubtedly acquainted with the only terms upon which congress can treat for accomplishing this good end; terms from which, although writing in a private character, I may venture to assert with great assurance, they never will recede, even admitting the continuance of hostile attempts, and that, from the rage of war, the good people of these states shall be driven to commence a treaty westward of yonder mountains. And permit me to add, sir, as my humble opinion, the true interest of Great Britain, in the present advance of our contest, will be found in confirming our independence.

“Congress in no hour have been haughty; but to suppose that their minds are less firm at the present, than they were when destitute of all foreign aid, even without expectation of an alliance; when, upon a day of general public fasting and humiliation in their house of worship, and in presence of God, they resolved, “to hold no conference or treaty with any commissioners on the part of Great Britain, unless they shall, as a preliminary thereto, either withdraw their fleets and armies, or in positive and express terms acknowledge the independence of these states,” would be irrational.

“At a proper time, sir, I shall think myself highly honoured by a personal attention, and by contributing to render every part of these states agreeable to you; but until the basis of mutual confidence shall be established, I believe, sir, neither former private friendship, nor any other consideration, can influence congress to consent, that even governor Johnstone, a gentleman who has been so deservedly esteemed in America, shall see the country. I have but one voice, and that shall be against it. But let me intreat you, my dear sir, do not hence conclude that I am deficient in affection to my

old friends, through whose kindness I have obtained the honour of the present correspondence, or that I am not, with very great personal respect and esteem,

“ Sir,

“ Your most obedient,

“ And most humble servant,

“ HENRY LAURENS.

“ The Honourable GEO. JOHNSTONE, Esq.

“ *Philadelphia.*”

In a letter to Joseph Reed, of April the 11th, governor Johnstone said, “The man who can be instrumental in bringing us all to act once more in harmony, and to unite together the various powers which this contest has drawn forth, will deserve more from the king and people, from patriotism, humanity, and all the tender ties that are affected by the quarrel and reconciliation, than ever was yet bestowed on human kind.” On the 16th of June, he wrote to Robert Morris: “I believe the men who have conducted the affairs of America incapable of being influenced by improper motives; but in all such transactions there is risk. And, I think, that whoever ventures should be secured, at the same time that honour and emolument should naturally follow the fortune of those, who have steered the vessel in the storm, and brought her safely to port. I think Washington and the president have a right to every favour, that grateful nations can bestow, if they could once more unite our interest, and spare the miseries and devastations of war.”

To Joseph Reed, private information was communicated, that it had been intended by governor Johnstone, to offer him, that in case of his exerting his abilities to promote a re-union of the two countries, if consistent with his principles and judgment, ten thousand pounds sterling, and any office in the colonies, within his majesty's gift. To which Mr. Reed replied: “I am not worth purchasing: but such as I am, the king of Great Britain is not rich enough to do it.” Congress ordered all letters, received by members of congress from

any of the British commissioners, or their agents, or from any subject of the king of Great Britain, of a public nature, to be laid before them. The above letters and information being communicated, congress resolved; "that the same cannot but be considered, as direct attempts to corrupt their integrity, and that it is incompatible with the honour of congress, to hold any manner of correspondence or intercourse with the said George Johnstone, Esquire; especially to negotiate with him upon affairs in which the cause of liberty is interested." Their determination, with the reasons thereof, was expressed in the form of a declaration, a copy of which was signed by the president, and sent by a flag to the commissioners at New York. This was answered by governor Johnstone, by an angry publication, in which he denied, or explained away what had been alleged against him. Lord Carlisle, sir Henry Clinton, and Mr. Eden denied having any knowledge of the matter charged on governor Johnstone.

The commissioners, failing in their attempts to negotiate with congress, had no resource left, but to persuade the inhabitants to adopt a line of conduct, counter to that of their representatives. To this purpose, they published a manifesto and proclamation, addressed to congress, the assemblies, and all others, the free inhabitants of the colonies, in which they observed: "The policy, as well as the benevolence of Great Britain have so far checked the extremes of war, when they tended to distress a people still considered as our fellow subjects, and to desolate a country shortly to become a source of mutual advantage: but when that country professes the unnatural design, not only of estranging herself from us, but of mortgaging herself and her resources to our enemies, the whole contest is changed: and the question is, how far Great Britain may, by every means in her power, destroy or render useless a connexion contrived for her ruin, and for the aggrandizement of France. Under such circumstances, the laws of self-preservation must direct the conduct of Great Britain; and if the British colonies shall

become an accession to France, will direct her to render that accession of as little avail as possible to her enemy."

Congress, upon being informed of the design of the commissioners to circulate these papers, declared that the agents, employed to distribute the manifestos and proclamation of the commissioners, were not entitled to protection from a flag. They also recommended to the several states to secure and keep them in close custody: but that they might not appear to hood-wink their constituents, they ordered the manifestos and proclamation to be printed in the news papers. The proposals of the commissioners were not more favourably received by the people than they had been by congress. In some places, the flags containing them were not received, but ordered instantly to depart; in others, they were received and forwarded to congress, as the only proper tribunal to take cognizance of them. In no one place, not immediately commanded by the British army, was there any attempt to accept, or even to deliberate on the propriety of closing with the offers of Britain.

To deter the British from executing their threats of laying waste the country, congress, on the 30th of October, published to the world a resolution and manifesto, in which they concluded with these words:

"We, therefore, the congress of the United States of America, do solemnly declare and proclaim, that, if our enemies presume to execute their threats, or persist in their present career of barbarity, we will take such exemplary vengeance as shall deter others from a like conduct. We appeal to that God who searcheth the hearts of men, for the rectitude of our intentions; and in his holy presence we declare, that, as we are not moved by any light and hasty suggestions of anger and revenge, so, through every possible change of fortune, we will adhere to this our determination."

This was the last effort of Great Britain, in the way of negociation, to regain her colonies. It originated in folly, and ignorance of the real state of affairs in America. She had begun with *wrong* measures, and had now got into *wrong*



time. Her concessions, on this occasion, were an implied justification of the resistance of the colonists. By offering to concede all that they at first asked for, she virtually acknowledged herself to have been the aggressor in an unjust war. Nothing could be more favourable to the cementing of the friendship of the new allies, than this unsuccessful negotiation. The states had an opportunity of evincing the sincerity of their engagements, and France abundant reason to believe that, by preventing their being conquered, her favourite scheme of lessening the power of Great Britain, would be secured beyond the reach of accident.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*Campaign of 1778.*

AFTER the termination of the campaign of 1777, the British army retired to winter quarters in Philadelphia, and the American army to Valley Forge. The former 1778 enjoyed all the conveniences which an opulent city afforded, while the latter, not half clothed, and more than once on the point of starving, were enduring the severity of a cold winter in a huddled camp. It was well for them, that the British made no attempt to disturb them, while in this destitute condition.

The winter and spring passed away without any more remarkable events in either army, than a few successful excursions of parties from Philadelphia to the neighbouring country, for the purpose of bringing in supplies, or destroying property. In one of these, a party of the British proceeded to Bordenton, and there burned four store-houses full of useful commodities. Before they returned to Philadelphia, they burned two frigates, nine ships, six privateer sloops, twenty-three brigs, with a number of sloops and schooners.

Soon afterwards, an excursion from Newport was made by 500 British and Hessians, under the command of lieutenant colonel Campbell. These, having landed in the night, marched next morning in two bodies, the one for Warren, the other for the head of Kickemuct river. They destroyed about 70 flat bottomed boats, and burned a quantity of pitch, tar and plank. They also set fire to the meeting house at Warren, and seven dwelling houses. At Bristol, they burned the church and 22 houses. Several other houses were plundered: and women were stripped of their shoe-buckles, gold rings and handkerchiefs.

A French squadron, consisting of 12 ships of the line and 4 frigates, commanded by count D'Estaing, sailed from

Toulon for America, soon after the treaty had been agreed upon between the United States and the king of France. After a passage of 87 days, 9th July, the count arrived at the entrance of the Delaware. From an apprehension of something of this kind, and from the prospect of greater security, it was resolved in Great Britain, forthwith to evacuate Philadelphia, and to concentrate the royal force in the city and harbour of New York. The commissioners brought out the orders for this movement; but knew nothing of the matter. It had an unfriendly influence on their proposed negotiations; but it was indispensably necessary; for if the French fleet had blocked up the Delaware, and the Americans besieged Philadelphia, the escape of the British from either, would have been scarcely possible.

The royal army, on the 18th of June, passed over the Delaware into New Jersey. Washington, having penetrated into their design of evacuating Philadelphia, had previously detached general Maxwell's brigade, to co-operate with the Jersey militia, in obstructing their progress. The British were incumbered with an enormous baggage, which, together with the impediments thrown in their way, greatly retarded their march. The American army having, in pursuit of the British, crossed the Delaware, six hundred men were immediately detached under colonel Morgan, to reinforce general Maxwell. Washington halted his troops, when they had marched to the vicinity of Princeton. The general officers, in the American army, 17 in number, being asked by the commander in chief: "Will it be advisable to hazard a general action?" 15 of them answered in the negative; but recommended a detachment of 1500 men, to be immediately sent, to act as occasion might serve, on the enemy's left flank and rear. This was immediately forwarded under general Scott. When sir Henry Clinton had advanced to Allentown, he determined, instead of keeping the direct course towards Staten-Island, to draw towards the sea coast, and to push on towards Sandy Hook. General Washington, on receiving intelligence that sir Henry was proceeding in that direction, towards Monmouth court-house, despatched 1000

men under general Wayne, and sent the Marquis de la Fayette to take command of the whole advanced corps, with orders to seize the first fair opportunity of attacking the enemy's rear. General Lee, who having been lately exchanged, had joined the army, was offered this command; but he declined it, as he was in principle against hazarding an attack. The whole army followed at a proper distance, for supporting the advanced corps, and reached Cranberry the next morning. Sir Henry Clinton, sensible of the approach of the Americans, placed his grenadiers, light infantry and chasseurs in his rear, and his baggage in his front. General Washington increased his advanced corps with two brigades, and sent general Lee, who now wished for the command, to take charge of the whole; and followed with the main army to give it support. On the next morning, orders were sent to Lee, to move on and attack, unless there should be powerful reasons to the contrary. When Washington had marched about five miles to support the advanced corps, he found the whole of it retreating by Lee's orders, and without having made any opposition of consequence. Washington rode up to Lee and proposed certain questions to him, which implied censure. Lee answered with warmth and unsuitable language. The commander in chief ordered colonel Stewart's and lieutenant colonel Ramsay's battalions to form on a piece of ground, which he judged suitable for giving a check to the advancing enemy. Lee was then asked, if he would command on that ground; to which he consented, and was ordered to take proper measures for checking the enemy: to which he replied, "your orders shall be obeyed, and I will not be the first to leave the field." Washington then rode to the main army, which was formed with the utmost expedition. A warm cannonade immediately commenced, between the British and American artillery, and a heavy firing between the advanced troops of the British army, and the two battalions which general Washington had halted. These stood their ground, till they were intermixed with a part of the British army. Lieutenant colonel Ramsay, the commander of one of them, was wounded and taken



prisoner. General Lee continued till the last on the field of battle, and brought off the rear of the retreating troops.

The check the British received gave time to make a disposition of the left wing, and second line of the American army in the wood, and on the eminence to which Lee was retreating. On this, some cannon were placed by lord Stirling, who commanded the left wing; which, with the co-operation of some parties of infantry, effectually stopped the advance of the British in that quarter. General Greene took a very advantageous position, on the right of lord Stirling. The British attempted to turn the left flank of the Americans, but were repulsed. They also made a movement to the right, with as little success; for Greene with artillery disappointed their design. Wayne advanced with a body of troops, and kept up so severe and well-directed a fire, that the British were soon compelled to give way. They retired and took the position, which Lee had before occupied. Washington resolved to attack them, and ordered general Poor to move round upon their right, and general Woodford to their left; but they could not get within reach, before it was dark. These remained on the ground, which they had been directed to occupy during the night, with an intention of attacking early next morning; and the main body lay on their arms in the field, to be ready for supporting them. General Washington reposed himself in his cloak, under a tree, in hopes of renewing the action the next day: but these hopes were frustrated. The British troops marched away in the night, in such silence, that general Poor, though very near them, knew nothing of their departure. They left behind them, four officers and about forty privates, all so badly wounded, that they could not be removed. The British, June 30th, pursued their march without further interruption, and soon reached the neighbourhood of Sandy Hook, without the loss of either their covering party or baggage. The American general declined all further pursuit of the royal army, and soon after drew off his troops to the borders of the North river. The loss of the Americans, in killed and wounded, was about 250. The loss of the royal army, inclusive of

prisoners, was about 350. Lieut. colonel Monckton, one of the British slain, on account of his singular merit was universally lamented. Colonel Bonner of Pennsylvania, and major Dickenson of Virginia, officers highly esteemed by their country, fell in this engagement. The emotions of the mind, added to fatigue in a very hot day, brought on such a fatal suppression of the vital powers, that some of the Americans, and 59 of the British were found dead on the field of battle, without any marks of violence upon their bodies.

It is probable, that Washington intended to take no further notice of Lee's conduct in the day of action; but the latter could not brook the expressions used by the former at their first meeting, and wrote him two passionate letters. This occasioned his being arrested, and brought to trial. The charges exhibited against him were:—

1st. For disobedience of orders, in not attacking the enemy on the 28th of June, agreeable to repeated instructions.

2dly. For misbehaviour before the enemy, on the same day, by making an unnecessary, disorderly, and shameful retreat.

3dly. For disrespect to the commander in chief in two letters.

After a tedious hearing before a court martial, Lee was found guilty, and sentenced to be suspended from any command in the armies of the United States, for the term of one year; but the second charge was softened by the court martial who in their award only found him guilty of misbehaviour before the enemy, by making an unnecessary, and in some few instances, a disorderly retreat. Many were displeased with this sentence. They argued, “that, by the tenor of Lee's orders, it was submitted to his discretion, whether to attack or not; and also, that the time and manner were to be determined by his own judgment; that at one time he intended to attack, but altered his opinion on apparently good grounds; that the propriety of an attack, considering the superiority of the British cavalry, and the openness of the ground, was very questionable; and that, though it might have distressed the enemy's rear in the first instance, it would

probably have brought on a general action, before the advanced corps could have been supported by the main body, which was some miles in the rear." "If," said they, "Lee's judgment were against attacking the enemy, he could not be guilty of disobeying an order for that purpose, which was suspended on the condition of his own approbation of the measure." They also contended, that a suspension from command was not a sufficient punishment for his crimes, if really guilty. They therefore inferred a presumption of his innocence from the lenient sentence of his judges. Though there was a diversity of opinion relative to the first and second charges, all were agreed in pronouncing him guilty of disrespect to the commander in chief. The Americans had formerly idolised general Lee; but some of them now went to the opposite extreme, and without any foundation pronounced him treacherous, or deficient in courage. His temper was violent, and his impatience of subordination had led him often to quarrel with those whom he was bound to respect and obey; but his courage and fidelity could not be questioned.

Soon after the battle of Monmouth, the American army took post at the White Plains, a few miles beyond Kingsbridge; and the British, though only a few miles distant, did not molest them. They remained in this position, from an early day in July, till a late one in the autumn: and then the Americans retired to Middle Brook in Jersey, where they built themselves huts in the same manner as they had done at Valley Forge.

Immediately on the departure of the British from Philadelphia, congress, after an absence of nine months, returned to the former seat of their deliberations. Soon after their return, 6th August, they were called upon, to give a public audience to a minister plenipotentiary from the court of France. The person appointed to this office was M. Gerard, the same who had been employed in the negotiations, antecedent to the treaty. The arrival and reception of a minister from France, made a strong impression on the minds of the Americans. They felt the weight and importance, to

which they were risen among nations. That the same spot which in less than a century, had been the residence of savages, should become the theatre on which, the representatives of a new, free, and civilized nation, gave a public audience to a minister plenipotentiary, from one of the oldest and most powerful kingdoms of Europe, afforded ample materials for philosophic contemplation. That in less than three years from the day, on which an answer was refused by Great Britain to the united supplications of the colonists, praying for peace, liberty and safety, they should, as an independent people, be honoured with the residence of a minister from the court of France, exceeded the expectation of the most sanguine Americans. The patriots of the new world revolved in their minds these transactions, with heart-felt satisfaction; while the devout were led to admire that Providence, which had, in so short a space, stationed the United States among the powers of the earth, and clothed them in robes of sovereignty.

The British had barely completed the removal of their fleet and army, from the Delaware and Philadelphia, to the harbour and city of New York, when they received intelligence, that a French fleet was on the coast of America. This was commanded by count D'Estaign, and consisted of twelve ships of the line and three frigates. Among the former, one carried 90 guns, another, 80 and six 74 guns each. Their first object was the surprise of lord Howe's fleet in the Delaware; but they arrived too late. In naval history, there are few more narrow escapes than that of the British fleet, on this occasion. It consisted only of six 64 gun ships, three of 50, and two of 40, with some frigates and sloops. Most of these had been long on service, and were in a bad condition. Their force, when compared with that of the French fleet, was so greatly inferior, that had the latter reached the mouth of the Delaware, in 75 days from its leaving Toulon, their capture, in the ordinary course of events, would have been inevitable. This was prevented, by the various hindrances which retarded D'Estaign in his voyage to the term of 87 days; in the last eleven of which, lord Howe's fleet, not only



quitted the Delaware, but reached the harbour of New York. D'Estaing, disappointed in his first scheme, pursued, and, July 11th, appeared off Sandy Hook. American pilots of the first abilities, provided for the purpose, went on board his fleet. Among them were persons, whose circumstances placed them above the ordinary rank of pilots.

The sight of the French fleet roused all the active passions of their adversaries. Transported with indignation against the French, for interfering in what they called a domestic quarrel, the British displayed a spirit of zeal and bravery which could not be exceeded. A thousand volunteers were dispatched from their transports to man their fleet. The masters and mates, of the merchantmen and traders at New York, took their stations at the guns with the common sailors. Others put to sea in light vessels, to watch the motions of their enemies. The officers and privates of the British army contended, with so much eagerness, to serve on board the men of war as marines, that it became necessary to decide the point of honour by lot.

The French fleet came to anchor, and continued without the Hook for eleven days. During this time, the British had the mortification of seeing the blockade of their fleet, and the capture of about 20 vessels under English colours. On the 22d, the French fleet appeared under weigh. It was an anxious moment to the British. They supposed that count D'Estaing would force his way into the harbour, and that an engagement would be the consequence. Every thing with them was at stake. Nothing less than destruction or victory would have ended the contest. If the first had been their lot, the vast fleet of transports and victuallers, and the army, must have fallen. The pilots on board the French fleet, declared it to be impossible to carry the large ships thereof over the bar, on account of their draught of water. D'Estaing, on that account, and by the advice of general Washington, left the Hook and sailed for Newport. By his departure the British had a second escape; for had he remained at the Hook but a few days longer, the fleet of admiral Byron must have fallen into his hands. That officer had been sent out to relieve lord

Howe, who had solicited to be recalled; and the fleet under his command had been sent to reinforce that which had been previously on the coast of America. Admiral Byron's squadron had met with bad weather, and was separated in different storms. It now arrived, scattered, broken, dismasted, or otherwise damaged. Within eight days after the departure of the French fleet, the *Renown*, the *Raisonable*, the *Centurion*, and the *Cornwall*, arrived singly at Sandy Hook.

The next attempt of count D'Estaing was against Rhode Island, of which the British had been in possession since December, 1776. A combined attack against it was projected, and it was agreed that general Sullivan should command the American land forces. Such was the eagerness of the people to co-operate with their new allies, and so confident were they of success, that some thousands of volunteers engaged in the service. The militia of Massachusetts was under the command of general Hancock. The royal troops on the island, having been lately reinforced, were about 6000. Sullivan's force was about 10,000. Lord Howe followed count D'Estaing, and came within sight of Rhode Island, the day after the French fleet entered the harbour of Newport. The British fleet exceeded the French in point of number, but was inferior with respect to effective force and weight of metal. On the appearance of lord Howe, the French admiral put out to sea with his whole fleet to engage him. While the two commanders were exerting their naval skill to gain respectively the advantages of position, a strong gale of wind came on, which greatly damaged the ships on both sides. In this conflict of the elements, two capital French ships were dismasted. The *Languedoc* of 90 guns, D'Estaing's own ship, after losing all her masts and her rudder, was attacked by the *Renown* of 50 guns, commanded by captain Dawson. The same evening, the *Preston* of 50 guns, fell in with the *Tonnant* of 80 guns, with only her mainmast standing, and attacked her with spirit: but night put an end to the engagement. Six sail of the French squadron came up in the night, which saved the disabled ships from any further attack.

There was no ship or vessel lost on either side. The British suffered less in the storm than their adversaries, yet enough to make it necessary for them to return to New York, for the purpose of refitting. The French fleet came to anchor, on the 20th of August, near to Rhode Island; but sailed on the 22d, to Boston. Before they sailed, general Greene and the marquis de la Fayette went on board the *Languedoc*, to consult on measures proper to be pursued. They urged D'Estaing to return with his fleet into the harbour; but his principal officers were opposed to the measure, and protested against it. He had been instructed to go to Boston, if his fleet met with any misfortune. His officers insisted on his ceasing to prosecute the expedition against Rhode Island, that he might conform to the orders of their common superiors. Upon the return of general Greene and the marquis de la Fayette, and their reporting the determination of of count D'Estaing, a protest was drawn up and sent to him, which was signed by John Sullivan, Nathaniel Greene, John Hancock, I. Glover, Ezekiel Cornell, William Whipple, John Tyler, Solomon Lovell, Jon. Fitconnell. In this, they protested against the count's taking the fleet to Boston, as derogatory to the honour of France, contrary to the intention of his Most Christian Majesty, and the interests of his nation, destructive in the highest degree to the welfare of the United States, and highly injurious to the alliance formed between the two nations. Had D'Estaing prosecuted his original plan within the harbour, either before or immediately after the pursuit of lord Howe, the reduction of the British post on Rhode Island would have been probable; but his departure in the first instance to engage the British fleet, and in the second from Rhode Island to Boston, frustrated the whole. Perhaps, count D'Estaing hoped by something brilliant to efface the impressions made by his late failure at New York. Or he might have thought it imprudent to stake his whole fleet, within an harbour possessed by his enemies.

After his ships had suffered both from battle and the storm, the letter of his instructions, the importunity of his officers,

and his anxiety to have his ships speedily refitted, might have weighed with him to sail directly for Boston. Whatever were the reasons which induced him to adopt that measure, the Americans were greatly dissatisfied. They complained that they had incurred great expense and danger, under the prospect of the most effective co-operation; that depending thereon, they had risked their lives on an island, where, without naval protection, they were exposed to particular danger; that in this situation, they were first deserted, and afterwards totally abandoned, at a time, when, by persevering in the original plan, they had well-grounded hopes of speedy success. Under these apprehensions, the discontented militia went home in such crowds, that the regular army which remained, was in danger of being cut off from a retreat. In these embarrassing circumstances, general Sullivan extricated himself with judgment and ability. He began to send off his heavy artillery and baggage on the 26th, and retreated from his lines on the night of the 28th. It had been that day resolved in a council of war, to remove to the north end of the island, fortify their camp, secure a communication with the main, and hold the ground till it could be known whether the French fleet would return to their assistance. The marquis de la Fayette, by desire of his associates, set off for Boston, to request the speedy return of the French fleet. To this count D'Estaign would not consent; but he made a spirited offer to lead the troops under his command, and co-operate with the American land forces against Rhode Island.

Sullivan retreated with great order; but he had not been five hours at the north end of the island, when his troops were fired upon by the British, who had pursued them, on discovering their retreat. The pursuit was made by two parties and on two roads; to one was opposed colonel Henry B. Livingston; to the other John Laurens, aid-de-camp to general Washington, and each of them had a command of light troops. In the first instance, these light troops were compelled by superior numbers to give way; but they kept up a retreating fire. On being reinforced, they gave their



pursuers a check, and at length repulsed them. By degrees the action became in some respects general, and near 1200 Americans were engaged. The loss on each side was between two and three hundred.

Lord Howe's fleet, with sir Henry Clinton and about 4000 troops on board, being seen off the coast, general Sullivan concluded immediately to evacuate Rhode Island. As the sentries of both armies were within 400 yards of each other, the greatest caution was necessary. To cover the design of retreating, the show of resistance and continuance on the island was kept up. The retreat was made in the night, and nearly completed by twelve o'clock. Towards the last of it, the marquis de la Fayette returned from Boston. He had rode thither from Rhode Island, a distance of 70 miles, in seven hours, and returned in six and a half. Anxious to partake in the engagement, his mortification was not little at being absent on the day before. He was in time to bring off the picquets, and other parties that covered the retreat of the American army. This he did in excellent order. Not a man was left behind, nor was the smallest article lost.

The bravery and good conduct which John Laurens displayed on this occasion, were excelled by his republican magnanimity, in declining a military commission, which was conferred on him, by the representatives of his country. Congress resolved, that he should be presented with a continental commission, of lieutenant colonel, in testimony of the sense which they entertained of his patriotic and spirited services, and of his brave conduct in several actions, particularly in that of Rhode Island, on the 29th of August.

On the next day he wrote to congress a letter, expressing "his gratitude for the unexpected honour which they were pleased to confer him, and the satisfaction it would have afforded him, could he have accepted it without injuring the rights of the officers in the line of the army, and doing an evident injustice to his colleagues, in the family of the commander in chief. That having been a spectator of the convulsions occasioned in the army by disputes of rank, he held the tranquility of it too dear, to be instrumental in disturbing

it, and therefore intreated congress to suppress their resolve, ordering him the commission of lieutenant colonel, and to accept his sincere thanks for the intended honour."

With the abortive expedition to Rhode Island, there was an end to the plans, which were in this first campaign projected by the allies of congress, for a co-operation. The Americans had been intoxicated with hopes of the most decisive advantages; but in every instance they were disappointed. Lord Howe, with an inferiority of force, not only preserved his own fleet, but counteracted and defeated all the views and attempts of count D'Estaign. The French fleet gained no direct advantages for the Americans: yet their arrival was of great service to their cause. Besides deranging the plans of the British, it carried conviction to their minds, that his Most Christian Majesty was seriously disposed to support them. The good will of their new allies was manifested to the Americans: and though it had failed in producing the effects expected from it, the failure was charged to winds, weather, and unavoidable incidents. Some censured count D'Estaign: but while they attempted to console themselves, by throwing blame on him, they felt and acknowledged their obligation to the French nation, and were encouraged to persevere in the war, from the hope that better fortune would attend their future co-operation.

Sir Henry Clinton, finding that the Americans had left Rhode Island, returned to New York; but directed general Grey to proceed to Bedford and the neighbourhood, where several American privateers resorted. On reaching the place of their destination, the general's party landed, and in a few hours destroyed about 70 sail of shipping, besides a number of small craft. They also burnt magazines, wharves, stores, warehouses, vessels on the stocks, and a considerable number of dwelling houses. The buildings burned in Bedford, were estimated to be worth 20,000*l.* sterling. The other articles destroyed were worth much more. The royal troops proceeded to Martha's vineyard. There they destroyed a few vessels, and made a requisition of the militia arms, the public money, 300 oxen and 2000 sheep, which was complied with.

A similar expedition, under the command of captain Ferguson, was about the same time undertaken against Little Egg-Harbour, at which place the Americans had a number of privateers and prizes, and also some salt-works. Several of the vessels got off; but all that were found were destroyed. Previous to the embarkation of the British from Egg-Harbour for New York, captain Ferguson with 250 men, surprised and put to death about 50 of a party of the Americans, who were posted in the vicinity. The attack being made in the night, little or no quarter was given.

The loss sustained by the British in these several excursions was trifling; but the advantage was considerable, from the supplies they procured, and the check which was given to the American privateers.

One of the most disastrous events, which occurred at this period of the campaign, was the surprise and massacre of an American regiment of light dragoons, commanded by lieutenant colonel Baylor. While employed in a detached situation, to intercept and watch a British foraging party, they took up their lodging in a barn near Tappan. The officer, who commanded the party which surprised them, was major general Grey. He acquired the name of the "No flint General," from his common practice of ordering the men, under his command, to take the flints out of their muskets, that they might be confined to the use of their bayonets. A party of militia, which had been stationed on the road, by which the British advanced, quitted their posts, without giving any notice to colonel Baylor. This disorderly conduct was the occasion of the disaster which followed. Grey's men proceeded with such silence and address, that they cut off a serjeant's patrol without noise, and surrounded old Tappan without being discovered. They then rushed in upon Baylor's regiment, while they were in a profound sleep. Incapable of defence or resistance, cut off from every prospect of selling their lives dear, the surprised dragoons sued for quarters. Unmoved by their supplications, their adversaries applied the bayonet, and continued its repeated thrusts, while objects could be found, in which any signs of life

appeared. A few escaped, and others, after having received from five to eleven bayonet wounds in the trunk of the body, were restored, in a course of time, to perfect health. Baylor himself was wounded; but not dangerously. He lost, in killed, wounded and taken, 67 privates out of 104. About 40 were made prisoners. These were indebted, for their lives, to the humanity of one of Grey's captains, who gave quarters to the whole fourth troop, though contrary to the orders of his superior officers. The circumstance of the attack being made in the night, when neither order nor discipline can be observed, may apologise in some degree, with men of a certain description, for this bloody scene. It cannot be maintained that the laws of war require that quarters should be given in similar assaults; but the lovers of mankind must ever contend, that the laws of humanity are of superior obligation to those of war. The truly brave will spare when resistance ceases, and in every case where it can be done with safety. The perpetrators of such actions may justly be denominated the enemies of refined society. As far as their example avails, it tends to arrest the growing humanity of modern times, and to revive the barbarism of Gothic ages. On these principles, the massacre of colonel Baylor's regiment was the subject of much complaint. The particulars of it were ascertained, by the oaths of sundry credible witnesses, taken before governor Livingston, of Jersey; and the whole was submitted to the judgment of the public.

In the summer of this year, an expedition was undertaken against East Florida. This was resolved upon, with the double view of protecting the state of Georgia from depredation, and of causing a diversion. General Robert Howe, who conducted it, had under his command about 2000 men, a few hundred of whom were continental troops, and the remainder militia of the states of South Carolina and Georgia. They proceeded as far as St. Mary's river, and without any opposition of consequence. At this place, the British had erected a fort, which, in compliment to Tonyn, governor of the province, was called by his name. On the approach of



general Howe, they destroyed this fort, and, after some slight skirmishing, retreated towards St. Augustine. The season was more fatal to the Americans, than any opposition they experienced from their enemies. Sickness and death raged to such a degree, that an immediate retreat became necessary; but before this was effected, they lost nearly one-fourth of their whole number.

The royal commissioners having failed in their attempts to induce the Americans to resume the character of British subjects, and the successive plans of co-operation between the new allies having also failed, a solemn pause ensued. It would seem as if the commissioners indulged a hope, that the citizens of the United States, on finding a disappointment of their expectations from the French, would re-consider and accept the offers of Great Britain. Full time was given, both for the circulation of their manifesto, and for observing its effects on the public mind: but no overtures were made to them from any quarter. The year was drawing near to a close, before any interesting expedition was undertaken. With this new era, a new system was introduced.

Hitherto, the conquest of the states had been attempted by proceeding from north to south: but that order was henceforth inverted, and the southern states became the principal theatre, on which the British conducted their offensive operations. Georgia, being one of the weakest states in the union, and at the same time abounding in provisions, was marked out as the first object of renewed warfare. Lieutenant colonel Campbell, an officer of known courage and ability, embarked from New York for Savannah, 27th November, with a force of about 2000 men, under the convoy of some ships of war, commanded by commodore Hyde Parker. To make more sure of success in the enterprise, major general Prevost, who commanded the royal forces in East Florida, was directed to advance with them into the southern extremity of Georgia. The fleet that sailed from New York, in about three weeks, effected a landing near the mouth of the river Savannah. From the landing place, a narrow causeway of six hundred yards in length, with a ditch on each side, led

through a swamp. A body of the British light infantry moved forward along this causeway. On their advance, they received a heavy fire from a small party under captain Smith, posted for the purpose of impeding their passage. Captain Cameron was killed; but the British made their way good, and compelled captain Smith to retreat. General Howe, the American officer to whom the defence of Georgia was committed, took his station on the main road, and posted his little army, consisting of about 600 continentals, and a few hundred militia, between the landing-place and the town of Savannah, with the river on his left, and a morass in front. This disposition announced great difficulties to be overcome, before the Americans could be dislodged. While colonel Campbell was making the necessary arrangements for this purpose, he received intelligence from a negro, of a private path through the swamp, on the right of the Americans, which lay in such a situation, that the British troops might march through it unobserved. Sir James Baird, with the light infantry, was directed to avail himself of this path, in order to turn the right wing of the Americans, and attack their rear. As soon as it was supposed that sir James Baird had cleared his passage, the British, in front of the Americans, were directed to advance and engage. Howe, finding himself attacked in the rear as well as in the front, ordered an immediate retreat. The British pursued with great execution: their victory was complete. Upwards of 100 of the Americans were killed. Thirty-eight officers, 415 privates, 48 pieces of cannon, 23 mortars, the fort, with its ammunition and stores, the shipping in the river, a large quantity of provisions, with the capital of Georgia, were all, in the space of a few hours, in the possession of the conquerors. The broken remains of the American army retreated up the river Savannah for several miles, and then took shelter by crossing into South Carolina.

Agreeably to instructions, general Prevost had marched from East Florida, about the same time that the embarkation took place from New York. After encountering many difficulties, the king's troops from St. Augustine reached the inha-

bited parts of Georgia, and there heard the welcome tidings of the arrival and success of colonel Campbell. 'Savannah having fallen, the fort at Sunbury surrendered. General Prevost marched to Savannah, and took the command of the combined forces from New York and St. Augustine. Previous to his arrival, a proclamation had been issued, to encourage the inhabitants to come in and submit to the conquerors, with promises of protection, on condition that with their arms they would support royal government.

Lieutenant colonel Campbell acted with great policy, in securing the submission of the inhabitants. He did more in a short time, and with comparatively a few men, towards the re-establishment of the British interest, than all the general officers who had preceded him. He not only extirpated military opposition, but subverted for some time every trace of republican government, and paved the way for the re-establishment of a royal legislature. Georgia, soon after the reduction of its capital, exhibited a singular spectacle. It was the only state of the union, in which, after the declaration of independence, a legislative body was convened under the authority of the crown of Great Britain. The moderation and prudence of lieutenant colonel Campbell were more successful in reconciling the minds of the citizens to their former constitution, than the severe measures which had been generally adopted by other British commanders.

The errors of the first years of the war, forced on congress some useful reforms, in the year 1778. The insufficiency of the provision made for the support of the officers of their army, had induced many resignations. From a conviction of the justice and policy of making commissions valuable, and from respect to the warm, but disinterested recommendations of general Washington, congress resolved: "that half-pay should be allowed to their officers, for the term of seven years, after the expiration of their service." This was, afterwards, extended to the end of their lives. And finally, that was commuted for full pay, for five years. Resignations were afterwards rare, and the states reaped the benefit of experienced officers continuing in service, till the war was ended.

A system of more regular discipline was introduced into the American army, by the industry, abilities, and judicious regulations of baron de Steuben, a most excellent disciplinarian, who had served under the king of Prussia. A very important reform took place in the medical department, by appointing different officers, to discharge the directing and purveying business of the military hospitals, which had been before united in the same hands. Dr. Rush was principally instrumental in effecting this beneficial alteration. Some regulations, which had been adopted for limiting the prices of commodities, being found not only impracticable, but injurious, were abolished.

The Randolph, an American frigate of 36 guns and 305 men, commanded by captain Biddle, having sailed on a cruise from Charleston, fell in with the Yarmouth, of 64 guns, and engaged her in the night. In about a quarter of an hour, the Randolph blew up. Four men only were saved, upon a piece of her wreck. These had subsisted for four days on nothing but rain water, which they sucked from a piece of blanket. On the 5th day, captain Vincent of the Yarmouth, though in chase of a ship, on discovering them, suspended the chase, and took them on board. Captain Biddle, who perished on board the Randolph, was universally lamented. He was in the prime of life, and had excited high expectations of future usefulness to his country, as a bold and skillful officer.

Major Talbot took the British schooner Pigot, of 8 twelve pounders, as she lay on the eastern side of Rhode Island. The major, with a number of troops on board a small vessel, made directly for the Pigot in the night, and sustaining the fire of her marines, reserved his own till he had run his jibboom through her fore-shrouds. He then fired some cannon, threw in a volley of musquetry, loaded with bullets and buckshot, and immediately boarded her. The captain made a gallant resistance, but was not seconded by his crew. Major Talbot soon gained undisturbed possession, and carried off his prize in safety. Congress, as a reward of his merit, presented him with the commission of lieutenant colonel.



## CHAPTER XVII.

*Campaign of 1779.*

THROUGHOUT the year 1779, the British seem to have aimed at little more, in the states to the northward of Carolina, than distress and depredation. Having publicly announced their resolution of making “the colonies of as little avail as possible to their new connexions,” they planned sundry expeditions, on this principle.

One of these, consisting of both a naval and land force, was committed to sir George Collyer and general Mathews, who made a descent on Virginia. They sailed for Portsmouth, and on their arrival took possession of that defenceless town. The remains of Norfolk, on the opposite side of the river, fell of course into their hands. The Americans burned some of their own vessels ; but others were made prizes by the invaders. The British guards marched 18 miles in the night, and, arriving at Suffolk by morning, proceeded to the destruction of vessels, naval stores, and of a large magazine of provisions, which had been deposited in that place. A similar destruction was carried on at Kemp’s landing, Shepherd’s-gosport, Tanners creek, and other places in the vicinity. The frigates and armed vessels were employed on the same business, along the margin of the rivers. Three thousand hogsheads of tobacco were taken at Portsmouth. Every house in Suffolk was burnt, except the church, and one dwelling house. The houses of several private gentlemen in the country shared the same fate. Above 130 vessels were either destroyed or taken. All that were upon the stocks were burned, and every thing relative to the building or fitting of ships was either carried off or destroyed. After demolishing Fort Nelson, and setting fire to the store-houses, and other public buildings in the dock-yard at Gosport, the British embarked from Virginia, and returned with their prizes and booty safe to New York, in the same month in which they had left it. This expe-

dition into Virginia, distressed a number of its inhabitants, and enriched the British forces, but was of no real service to the royal cause. It was presumed, that, by involving the citizens in losses and distress, they would be brought to reflect on the advantages of submitting to a power, against which they had not the means of defending themselves : but the temper of the times was unfavourable to these views. Such was the high-toned state of the American mind, that property had comparatively lost its value. It was fashionable to suffer in the cause of independence. Some hearty whigs gloried in their losses with as much pride as others gloried in their possessions. The British, supposing the Americans to be influenced by the considerations which bias men in the languid scenes of tranquil life, and not reflecting on the sacrifices which enthusiastic patriotism is willing to make, proceeded in their schemes of distress : but the more extensively they carried on this mode of warfare, the more obstacles they created to the re-union of the empire.

In about five weeks after the termination of the expedition to Virginia, a similar one was projected against the exposed margin of Connecticut. Governor Tryon was appointed to the command of about 2600 land forces, employed on this business, and he was supported by general Garth. The transports which conveyed these troops, were covered by a suitable number of armed vessels, commanded by sir George Collyer. They proceeded from New York, by the way of Hell-gate, and landed at East Haven. The royal commanders made an address to the inhabitants, in which they invited them to return to their duty and allegiance, and promised protection to all who should remain peaceably in their usual place of residence, except the civil and military officers of the government. It also stated, “that their property lay within the grasp of that power, whose lenity had persisted in its mild and noble efforts, though branded with the most unworthy imputation ; that the existence of a single house, on their defenceless coast, ought to be a constant reproof of their ingratitude ; that they, who lay so much in the British power, afforded a striking monument of their mercy, and

therefore ought to set the first example of returning to their allegiance."

One of the many addresses, from which the above extract is taken, was sent by a flag to colonel Whiting, of the militia near Fairfield. The colonel was allowed an hour, for his answer; but he had scarcely time to read it, before the town was in flames. He nevertheless returned the following answer: "Connecticut, having nobly dared to take up arms against the cruel despotism of Great Britain, and the flames having preceded the answer to your flag, they will persist to oppose to the utmost the power exerted against injured innocence." The British marched from their landing to Newhaven. The town on their entering it, was delivered up to promiscuous plunder, a few instances of protection excepted. The inhabitants were stripped of their household furniture and other moveable property. The harbour and water side were covered with feathers, which were discharged from opened beds. An aged citizen, who laboured under a natural inability of speech, had his tongue cut out by one of the royal army. After perpetrating every species of enormity, but that of burning houses, the invaders suddenly reembarked and proceeded by water to Fairfield. The militia of that place and the vicinity, posted themselves at the court-house green, and gave considerable annoyance to them, as they were advancing, but soon retreated to the back of the town. On the approach of the British, the town was evacuated by most of its inhabitants. A few women remained, with the view of saving their property. They imagined that their sex would protect them. They also reposed confidence in an enemy who had been formerly famed for humanity and politeness; but they bitterly repented their presumption. Parties of the royal army entered the deserted houses of the inhabitants; broke open desks, trunks, closets and chests; and took every thing of value that came in their way. They robbed the women of their buckles, rings, bonnets, aprons and handkerchiefs. They abused them with the foulest language, threatened their lives, and presented the bayonets to their breasts. A sucking infant was plun-

dered of part of its cloathing, while the bayonet was presented to the breast of its mother. Towards evening, they began to burn the houses, which they had previously plundered. The women begged general Tryon to spare the town. Mr. Sayre, the episcopal minister, who had suffered for his attachment to the royal cause, joined the women in their requests: but their joint supplications were disregarded. They then begged, that a few houses might be spared for a general shelter. This was at first denied; but at length Tryon consented to save the buildings of Mr. Burr and of Mr. Elliot, and also that the houses for public worship should be spared. After his departure on the next morning with the main body, the rear guard consisting of German yeagers set fire to every thing which Tyron had spared; but on their departure the inhabitants extinguished the flames, and saved some of the houses. The militia were joined by numbers from the country, who successively came in to their aid; but they were too few to make effectual opposition.

The British, in this excursion, also burned East Haven, and the greatest part of Green's farms, and the flourishing town of Norwalk. A considerable number of ships, either finished or on the stocks, with whale-boats, and a large amount of stores and merchandise, were destroyed. Particular accounts of these devastations were, in a short time, transmitted by authority to congress. By these it appeared, that there were burnt at Norwalk, two houses of public worship, 80 dwelling houses, 87 barns, 22 stores, 17 shops, 4 mills, and 5 vessels; and at Fairfield, two houses of public worship, 15 dwelling houses, 11 barns, and several stores. There were, at the same time, a number of certificates transmitted to general Washington, in which sundry persons of veracity bore witness on oath to various acts of brutality, rapine and cruelty, committed on aged persons, women and prisoners. Congress, on receiving satisfactory attestation of the ravages of the British, in this and other similar expeditions, resolved: "To direct their marine committee to take the most effectual measures, to carry into execution their manifesto of October 30th, 1778, by burning or destroy-



ing the towns belonging to the enemy in Great Britain or the West Indies:" but their resolve was never carried into effect.

The elder citizens of the United States, who had grown up with habits of love and attachment to the British nation, felt the keenest sensations of regret, when they contrasted the years 1759 and 1779. The former was their glory, when in the days of their youth, they were disposed to boast of the honours of their common country: but the latter filled them with distress, not only for what they suffered, but for the degradation of a country they revered as the natal soil of their forefathers. The one ennobled the British name with the conquest of Crown-Point, Oswego, Montreal, Quebec, and the whole province of Canada. The other was remarkable, only for the burning of magazines, store-houses, dock-yards, the towns of Fairfield and Norwalk, and for the general distress of a defenceless peasantry.

The fires and destruction, which accompanied this expedition, were severely censured by the Americans, and apologised for by the British in a very unsatisfactory manner. The latter, in their vindication, alleged that the houses which they had burned gave shelter to the Americans, while they fired from them, and on other occasions concealed their retreat.

Tryon, who was a civil governor as well as a general, undertook the justification of the measure, on principles of policy. "I should be very sorry," said he, "if the destruction of these villages would be thought less reconcileable with humanity, than the love of my country, my duty to the king, and the laws of arms. The usurpers have professedly placed their hopes, of severing the empire, in avoiding decisive actions; upon the waste of the British treasures; and upon the escape of their own property, during the protraction of the war. Their power is supported, by the general dread of their tyranny and threats, practised to inspire a credulous multitude, with a presumptuous confidence in our forbearance: I wish to detect this delusion." These devastations

were the subject of an elegant poem, written on the spot, a few days afterwards, by colonel Humphreys.

While the British were proceeding in these desolating operations, Washington was called upon for continental troops; but he could spare very few. He durst not detach largely; as he apprehended that one design of the British in these movements was, to draw off a proportion of his army from West-Point, to favour an intended attack on that important post. General Parsons, though closely connected with Connecticut, and though, from his small force, he was unable to make successful opposition to the invaders, yet, instead of pressing general Washington for a large detachment of continental troops, wrote to him as follows: "The British may probably distress the country exceedingly, by the ravages they will commit: but I would rather see all the towns on the coast of my country, in flames, than that the enemy should possess West-Point."

The inhabitants feared much more than they suffered. They expected that the whole margin of their country, 120 miles in extent, would suffer the fate of Fairfield and Norwalk. The season of the year added much to their difficulties; as the close attention of the farmers to their harvesting could not be omitted, without hazarding their subsistence. These fears were not of long duration. In about ten days after the landing of the British troops, an order was issued for their immediate return to New York. This they effected, in a short time, and with a loss so inconsiderable, that, in the whole expedition, it did not exceed 150 men.

While the British were successfully making these desultory operations, the American army was incapable of covering the country. The former, by means of their superior marine force, having the command of the numerous rivers, bays, and harbours of the United States, had it in their power to make descents, where they pleased, with an expedition that could not be equalled by the American land forces. Had Washington divided his army, conformably to the wishes of the invaded citizens, he would have subjected his whole force to

he cut up in detail. It was therefore his uniform practice, to risk no more by way of covering the country, than was consistent with the general safety.

His army was posted at some distance from British headquarters in New York, and on both sides of the North River. The rear thereof, consisting of 300 infantry and 150 cavalry, under the command of colonel Anthony Walton White, patrolled constantly, for several months, in front of the British lines, and kept a constant watch on the Sound, and on the North River. This corps had sundry skirmishes with parties of the British, and was particularly useful in checking their excursions, and in procuring and communicating intelligence of their movements.

About this time, general Putnam, who had been stationed with a respectable command at Reading, in Connecticut, when on a visit to his out-post, at Horse-Neck, was attacked by governor Tryon, with about 1500 men. General Putnam had only a picquet of 150 men, and two iron field pieces, without horses or drag-ropes. He however planted his cannon on the high ground, near the meeting-house, and, by several fires, retarded the advancing enemy, and continued to make opposition, till he perceived the enemy's horse, supported by the infantry, were about to charge. General Putnam, after ordering the picquet to provide for their safety, by retiring to a swamp inaccessible to horse, plunged down the precipice at the church. This is so steep as to have artificial stairs, composed of nearly one hundred stone steps, for the accommodation of foot-passengers. The dragoons stopped short, without venturing down the abrupt declivity, and before they got round the brow of the hill, Putnam was far enough beyond their reach. Of the many balls that were fired at him, all missed except one, which went through his hat. He proceeded to Stamford, and, having strengthened his picquet with some militia, faced about, and pursued governor Tryon on his return.

The campaign of 1779, though barren of important events, was distinguished by one of the most gallant enterprises, which took place in the course of the war. This was the cap-

ture of Stoney-Point, on the North River. General Wayne, who had the honour of conducting this enterprise, at noon, on the 15th of July, set out at the head of a strong detachment, of the most active infantry in the American army, and completed a march of about 14 miles, over bad roads, by eight o'clock in the evening. The detachment, being then within a mile and a half of its object, was halted and formed into columns. The general, with a few of his officers, advanced and reconnoitred the works. At half past eleven, the whole moved forward to the attack. The van of the right, consisting of 150 volunteers, under the command of lieutenant colonel Fleury, advanced with unloaded muskets, and fixed bayonets. These were preceded by twenty picked men, who were particularly instructed to remove the abbatis and other obstructions. The van of the left was led by major Stewart, and advanced with unloaded muskets and fixed bayonets. It was also preceded by a similar forlorn hope. The general placed himself at the head of the right column, and gave the most pointed orders not to fire, but to depend solely on the bayonet. The two columns directed their attacks to opposite points of the works, while a detachment engaged the attention of the garrison, by a feint in their front. The approaches were more difficult than had been apprehended. The works were defended by a deep morass, which was also, at that time, overflowed by the tide. Neither the morass, the double row of abbatis, nor the strength of the works, damped the ardour of the assailants. In the face of a most tremendous fire of musketry, and of cannon loaded with grape-shot, they forced their way, at the point of the bayonet, through every obstacle, until both columns met in the centre of the works, at nearly the same instant. General Wayne, as he passed the last abbatis, was wounded in the head by a musket ball; but nevertheless insisted on being carried forward, adding as a reason, "that if he died, he wished it might be in the fort." Lieutenants Gibbens and Knox, who led the forlorn hope, escaped unhurt, although the first lost seventeen men out of twenty, and the last nearly as many. The killed and wounded of the Americans amounted to ninety-eight. The killed of the



garrison were sixty-three, and the number of their prisoners 543. Two flags, two standards, fifteen pieces of ordnance, and a considerable quantity of military stores, fell into the hands of the conquerors.

The vigour and spirit, with which this enterprise was conducted, was matter of triumph to the Americans. Congress gave their thanks to general Washington "for the vigilance, wisdom, and magnanimity with which he had conducted the military operations of the states, and which were, among many other signal instances, manifested in his orders for the above enterprise." They also gave thanks to general Wayne, and ordered a gold medal, emblematical of the action, to be struck, and presented to him. They directed a silver one to be presented to lieutenant colonel Fleury, and another to major Stewart. At the same time, they passed general resolutions, in honour of the officers and men, but particularly designating lieutenant colonel Fleury, major Stewart, lieutenants Gibbons and Knox. To the two latter, and also to Mr. Archer, the general's volunteer aid-de-camp, they gave the rank of captain.

The clemency, shewn to the vanquished, was universally applauded. The customs of war, and the recent barbarities at Fairfield and Norwalk, would have been an apology for the conquerors, had they put the whole garrison to the sword; but the assailants, no less generous than brave, ceased to destroy, as soon as their adversaries ceased to resist. Upon the capture of Stoney-Point, the victors turned its artillery against Verplank's-Point, and fired upon it with such effect, that the shipping in its vicinity cut their cables and fell down the river. As soon as the news of these events reached New York, preparations were instantly made to relieve the latter post, and to recover the former. It by no means accorded with the cautious prudence of Washington, to risk an engagement for either or both of them. He therefore removed the cannon and stores, destroyed the works, and evacuated the captured post. Sir Henry Clinton regained possession of Stoney-Point, on the third day after its capture, and placed in it a strong garrison.

The successful enterprise of the Americans, at Stoney-Point, was speedily followed by another, which equalled it in boldness of design. This was the surprise of the British garrison at Paulus Hook, opposite to New York, which was effected by major Lee, with about 350 men. Major Sutherland, the commandant, with a number of Hessians, got off safe to a small block-house, on the left of the fort; but about 30 of his men were killed, and 160 taken prisoners. The loss of the Americans was inconsiderable. Major Lee, in conformity to the orders he had received, made an immediate retreat, without waiting to destroy either the barracks or the artillery. Congress honoured him with their thanks, and ordered a medal of gold, emblematical of the affair, to be struck, and presented to him as a reward, "for his prudence, address, and bravery." They also passed resolutions applauding his humanity, and expressing their high sense of the good conduct of his troops; and at the same time, ordered a considerable donation in money to be distributed among them.

These advantages were more than counterbalanced, by an unsuccessful attempt, made by the state of Massachusetts, on a British post at Penobscot. Colonel Maclean, by the direction of sir Henry Clinton, landed with a detachment of 650 men, from Halifax, on the banks of Penobscot river, in the eastern confines of New England, and proceeded soon after to construct a fort in a well-chosen situation. This occasioned an alarm at Boston. To counteract the establishment of the post, vigorous measures were resolved upon. That armed vessels, transports, and sailors, might be secured for an expedition, which was immediately projected for this purpose, an embargo for forty days was laid by the state of Massachusetts, on all their shipping. A considerable armament, consisting of 18 armed vessels, besides transports, was fitted out with extraordinary expedition, and put under the command of commodore Saltonstall. The largest vessel in this fleet was the Warren of 32 guns, 18 and 12 pounders. The others varied from 24 to 12 guns. A body of land forces, commanded by general Lovell, embarked on this expedition. On the 25th of July, the American fleet, consisting of 37 sail,

appeared off Penobscot. Colonel Maclean had four days before gained information, of what was intended against him. This induced him to redouble his exertions in strengthening his fort, which was in an unfinished state. Two of the bastions were untouched. The remaining two were in no part above five feet high. The ditch was only about three feet deep. There was no platform laid, nor any artillery mounted. The American general on his landing, summoned the colonel to surrender, which being refused, he proceeded to erect a battery at the distance of 750 yards. A cannonading commenced, and was kept up for about a fortnight, but without any considerable effect. While the besiegers were making preparation for an assault, which they had in immediate contemplation, sir George Collyer appeared full in view, with a squadron for the relief of the garrison. He had sailed from Sandy Hook, on hearing of the intended attack on colonel Maclean's party, and in about eleven days arrived in the river Penobscot. His marine force consisted of the *Raisable*, of 64 guns, and five frigates. The Americans at first made a show of resistance; but they intended no more, than to give the transports time to move up the river, that the troops might have an opportunity of landing, and making their escape. The superior force and weight of metal of the *Raisable* was irresistible. A general flight on the one side, and a general chase on the other, took place. Sir George destroyed and took seventeen or eighteen armed vessels. The American soldiers and sailors had to return a great part of their way by land, and to explore their route through thick woods.

While the war languished as to great objects in the country where it originated, it was raging on a new element, and involving distant countries in its wide spreading flame. Hostilities, between the fleets of France and Great Britain, were carrying on in both the Indies, and in the European seas, as well as on the coast of America. His Most Catholic Majesty was also, about this time, induced to take a decided part with France against Great Britain.

To the surprise of many, the marquis D'Almodovar, the Spanish ambassador, delivered a manifesto to lord viscount

Weymouth, amounting to a declaration of war against Great Britain. This event had often been predicted by the minority in the British parliament; but disbelieved by the ministry. The latter reasoned, “that Spain could have no interest in joining their adversaries; that she had colonies of her own, and could not set so bad an example to them, as to give any countenance to the Americans.” It was also said “that Spain was naturally attached to Great Britain.” They were so far imposed upon, by their eagerness to effect the conquest of the United States, as to believe that to be true which they wished to be so. The event proved, that the politics of foreign powers, are not reducible to fixed principles. Sometimes one interest clashes with another; and it is not always the case that the strongest preponderates. Whether the influence of the French counsels, or the prospect of recovering Gibraltar, Jamaica, and Florida, or the pressure of recent injuries, determined the court of Spain to adopt this measure, it is impossible with certainty to decide; but circumstances make it probable, that the hope of regaining Gibraltar and Jamaica was the principal inducement.

The situation of Great Britain was at this time truly distressing. She was weakened and distracted by an unnatural war, in which victory produced no advantages; but defeat all its natural effects. In the midst of this wasting contest, in which her ability to reduce her revolted colonies, though without foreign aid, was doubtful, she was suddenly involved in a new and much more dangerous war, with one of the greatest powers in Europe. At the very time, while she was engaged in this double warfare, against old friends and old enemies, his Most Catholic Majesty added his force to that of her numerous foes.

In this situation, a dereliction of the American war was recommended, by some leading characters in the nation; but every proposition of that kind was overruled, and assurances, from both houses of parliament, were given to his majesty, “to support him in carrying on the war against all his enemies.”

From these events, which only affected the United States,



as far as they increased the embarrassments of Great Britain, I return, to relate the transactions which took place in their own limits. In the year 1779, though the war was carried on for little more than distress or depredation, in the northern states, the re-establishment of British government was seriously attempted in Carolina and Georgia. After the reduction of Savannah, a great part of the state of Georgia was restored to the king's peace. The royal army in that quarter was strengthened by a numerous reinforcement from East Florida, and the whole was put under the command of major general Prevost. The force then in Georgia gave a serious alarm to the adjacent states. There were at that time but few continental troops in Georgia, or South Carolina, and scarcely any in North Carolina; as during the late tranquility in the southern states, they had been detached to serve in the main army, commanded by Washington. A body of militia was raised and sent forward by North Carolina, to aid her neighbours. These joined the continental troops; but not till they had retreated out of Georgia, and taken post in South Carolina. Towards the close of the year 1778, general Lincoln, at the request of the delegates of South Carolina, was appointed by congress, to take the command of their southern army.

This consisted only of a few hundred continentals. To supply the deficiency of regular soldiers, a considerable body of militia was ordered to join him; but they added much more to his numbers, than to his effective force.

They had not yet learned the implicit obedience, necessary for military operations. Accustomed to activity on their farms, they could not bear the languor of an encampment. Having grown up in habits of freedom and independence, they reluctantly submitted to martial discipline. The royal army at Savannah, being reinforced by the junction of the troops from St. Augustine, was in condition to extend their posts. Their first object was to take possession of Port-Royal, in South Carolina. Major Gardiner, with two hundred men, being detached with this view, landed on the island; but general Moultrie, at the head of an equal

number of Americans, in which there were only nine regular soldiers, attacked and drove him off. This advantage was principally gained by two field pieces, which were well served by a party of Charleston militia artillery. The British lost almost all their officers. The Americans had eight men killed and twenty-two wounded. Among the former, was lieutenant Benjamin Wilkins, an artillery officer of great merit, and a citizen of distinguished virtue, whose early fall deprived a numerous family of their chief support. He was the first officer of South Carolina who lost his life in supporting its independence. This repulse restrained the British from attempting any immediate enterprise, to the northward of Savannah; but they fixed posts at Ebenezer, and Augusta, and extended themselves over a great part of Georgia. They also endeavoured to strengthen themselves, by reinforcements from the tories, in the western settlements of Georgia and Carolina.

Emissaries were sent among the inhabitants of that description, to encourage them to a general insurrection. They were assured, that, if they embodied and added their force to that of the king's army in Georgia, they would have such a decided superiority, as would make a speedy return to their homes practicable, on their own terms. Several hundreds of them accordingly rendezvoused, and set off to join the royal forces at Augusta. Among those who called themselves loyalists, there were many of the most infamous characters. Their general complexion was that of a plundering banditti, more solicitous for booty, than for the honour and interest of their royal master. At every period before the war, the western wilderness of the colonies, which extended to the Mississippi, afforded an asylum for the idle or disorderly, who disrelished the restraints of civil society. While the war raged, the demands of militia duty and of taxes contributed much to the peopling of those remote settlements, by holding out prospects of exemption from the control of government. Among these people, the royal emissaries had successfully planted the standard of loyalty; and of that class was a great proportion of those, who, in the upper country of

the Carolinas and Georgia, called themselves the king's friends. They had no sooner embodied, and began their march to join the royal army at Augusta, than they commenced such a scene of plundering the defenceless settlements, through which they passed, as induced the orderly inhabitants to turn out to oppose them. Colonel Pickens, with about 500 men of the latter character, immediately pursued, and came up with them, near Kettle-creek. An action took place, which lasted three quarters of an hour. The tories were totally routed. About forty of them were killed; and in that number was their leader colonel Boyd, who had been secretly employed by British authority to collect and head them. By this action, the British were disconcerted. The tories were dispersed. Some ran quite off. Others went to their homes, and cast themselves on the mercy of their country. These were tried by the laws of South Carolina, for offending against an act, called the sedition act, which had been passed since the revolution, for the security of the new government. Seventy of them were condemned to die; but the sentence was only executed on five of their ringleaders.

As the British extended their posts on the Georgia side of Savannah river, general Lincoln fixed encampments at Black-swamp, and nearly opposite to Augusta on the Carolina side. From these posts, he formed a plan of crossing into Georgia, with the view of limiting the British to the low country, near the ocean. In the execution of this design, general Ash, with 1500 North Carolina militia, and a few regular troops, after crossing the river Savannah, took a position on Briar-creek: but in a few days he was surprised by lieutenant colonel Prevost, who, having made a circuitous march, of about 50 miles, came unexpectedly on his rear, with about 900 men. The militia were thrown into confusion, and fled at the first fire. One hundred and fifty of the Americans were killed, and 162 were taken. Few had any chance of escaping, but by crossing the Savannah, in attempting which, many were drowned. Of those who got off safe, a great part returned home. The number that rejoined the

American camp, did not exceed 450 men. The few continentals under colonel Elbert, made a brave resistance; but the survivors of them, with their gallant leader, were at last compelled to surrender. This event deprived general Lincoln of one fourth of his numbers, and opened a communication between the British, the Indians, and the tories of North and South Carolina.

Inexperienced in the art of war, the Americans were subject to those reverses of fortune, which usually attend young soldiers. Unacquainted with military stratagems, deficient in discipline, and not broken to habits of implicit obedience, they were often surprised, and had to learn by repeated misfortunes the necessity of subordination, and the advantages of watchfulness and discipline. Their numbers in the field, to those who are acquainted with European wars, must appear inconsiderable; but such is the difference of the state of society, and of the population, in the old and new world, that in America, a few hundreds decided objects of equal magnitude with those, which, in Europe, would have called into the field as many thousands. The prize contended for was nothing less than the sovereignty of three millions of people, and of five hundred millions of acres of land; and yet, from the remote situation of the invading powers, and the thin population of the invaded states, especially in the southern extreme of the union, this momentous question was materially affected by the consequences of battles, in which only a few hundreds engaged.

The series of disasters, which had followed the American arms, since the landing of the British near Savannah, occasioned well-founded apprehensions for the safety of the adjacent states. The militia of South Carolina was therefore put on a better footing, and a regiment of cavalry was raised. John Rutledge, a Carolinian of the most distinguished abilities, was called to the chair of government, by an almost unanimous vote, and, in imitation of the ancient republic of Rome, invested, in conjunction with his council, with dictatorial powers. By virtue of his authority, he convened a large body of the militia, near the centre of the state, that



they might be in constant readiness, to march whithersoever public service required. The original plan of penetrating into Georgia was resumed. Part of the American force was stationed, on the north side of the Savannah, at Purrysburgh and Black-swamp, while general Lincoln, and the main army crossed into Georgia near Augusta. General Prevost availed himself of the critical moment, when the American army had ascended 150 miles, towards the source of the Savannah, and crossed into Carolina, over the same river, near to its mouth, with about 2400 men. A considerable body of Indians, whose friendship the British had previously secured, were associated with the British on this expedition. The superior British force, which crossed Savannah river, soon compelled general Moultrie, who was charged with the defence of South Carolina, to retire. Lincoln, on receiving information of these movements, detached 300 of his light troops to reinforce Moultrie; but proceeded with the main army towards the capital of Georgia. He was induced to pursue his original intention, from an idea that general Prevost meant nothing more, than to divert him by a feint on Carolina; and because his marching down, on the south side of the river Savannah, would occasion but little additional delay, in repairing to its defence. When Lincoln found that Prevost was seriously pushing for Charleston, he re-crossed the Savannah and pursued him. The British proceeded in their march by the main road near the sea coast, with but little opposition; and in the meantime, the Americans retreated before them, towards Charleston. General Moultrie, who ably conducted this retreat, had no cavalry to check the advancing foe. Instead of his receiving reinforcements from the inhabitants, as he marched through the country, he was abandoned by many of the militia, who went to their homes. Their families and property lay directly in the route of the invading army. The absence of the main army under Lincoln, the retreat of Moultrie, the plunderings and devastations of the invaders, and, above all, the dread of the Indian savages, who accompanied the royal army, diffused a general panic among the inhabitants. The terror of each individual became

a source of terror to another. From the influence of these causes, many were induced to apply for British protection. New converts to the royal standard endeavoured to ingratiate themselves with their protectors, by encouraging them to attempt the reduction of Charleston. Being in their power, they were more anxious to frame intelligence on the idea of what was agreeable, than of what was true. They represented the inhabitants as being generally tired of the war, and wishing for peace, at all events. They also stated that Charleston was incapable of much resistance. These circumstances, combined with the facility with which the British marched through the country, induced general Prevost to extend his plan, and push for Charleston. Had he designed it at first, and continued his march, with the same rapidity with which it was begun, the town would probably have been carried by a coup-de-main; but he halted two or three days, when advanced near half the distance. In that interval, every preparation was made by the South Carolinians, for the defence of their capital. All the houses in its suburbs were burnt. Lines and abbatiss were, in a few days, carried across the peninsula, between Ashley and Cooper rivers, and cannon were mounted at proper intervals on its whole extent. Though this visit of the British, especially an attack on the land side, was unexpected; yet in a few days, great preparations were made, and a force of 3300 men assembled in Charleston for its defence.

The main body and baggage of the British army, being left on the south side of Ashley river, an advanced detachment of 900 men crossed the ferry, and appeared before the town. In the meantime, Lincoln was marching on as fast as possible, for the relief of Charleston; but as his arrival was doubtful, and the crisis hazardous, to gain time was a matter of consequence. A whole day was therefore spent in exchange of flags. Commissioners from the garrison were instructed "to propose a neutrality, during the war between Great Britain and America; and that the question, whether the state shall belong to Great Britain, or remain one of the United States, be determined by the treaty of peace between

these powers." The British commanders refused this advantageous offer, alleging that they did not come in a legislative capacity, and insisted, that as the inhabitants and others were in arms, they should surrender prisoners of war. This being refused, the garrison prepared for an immediate assault; but it was not attempted. In the night of the same day, major Benjamin Huger, commanding a party without the lines, was, through mistake, killed by his countrymen. This was a loss indeed. The liberality, generosity and public spirit, which distinguished him as a citizen, added to great political and military talents, rendered his untimely death the subject of universal regret. By his fall, the country was deprived of one of its firmest and most useful friends, and the army lost one of its brightest ornaments. Prevost, learning by an intercepted letter that Lincoln was coming on in his rear, retreated from Charleston, and filed off with his whole force from the main, to the islands near the sea, that he might avoid being between two fires. Both armies encamped in the vicinity of Charleston, watching each others motions, till the 20th of June, when an attack was made with about 1200 Americans on six or 700 of the British, advantageously posted at Stono ferry. The latter had redoubts with a line of communication, and field pieces in the intervals; and the whole was secured with an abatis. By a preconcerted plan, a feint was to have been made from James Island, with a body of Charleston militia, at the moment when general Lincoln began the attack from the main; but, from mismanagement, they did not reach their place of destination, till the action was over. The attack was continued for an hour and twenty minutes, and the assailants had the advantage; but the appearance of a reinforcement, to prevent which the feint from James Island was intended, made their retreat necessary. The loss of the Americans in killed and wounded was about 150. Among the former was colonel Roberts, an artillery officer of distinguished abilities. Having been bred to arms in his native country, England, he had been particularly serviceable in diffusing military knowledge, among the less-informed American officers. In the short

interval between his being wounded and his dying, he was visited on the field of battle by his son, captain Roberts, of his own regiment. The expiring father presented his sword to his son, with an exhortation, to behave worthy of it, and to use it in the defence of liberty and his country. After a short conversation, he desired him to return to his proper station, adding for reason, “that there he might be useful; but to him he could be of no service.”

Immediately after this attack, the American militia, impatient of absence from their homes, returned to their plantations; and about the same time the British left the islands adjacent to Charleston, retreating from one to another, till they arrived at Port-Royal, and Savannah. A considerable garrison was left at the former place, under colonel Maitland: but the main body went to Savannah.

This incursion into South Carolina contributed very little to the advancement of the royal cause; but added much to the wealth of the officers, soldiers, and followers of the British army; and still more to the distresses of the inhabitants. The forces, under the command of general Prevost, spread themselves over a considerable part of the richest settlements of the state, and where there are the fewest white inhabitants, in proportion to the number of slaves. There was much to attract: but little to resist the invaders. Small parties visited almost every house, and, unopposed, took whatever they chose. They not only rifled the inhabitants of household furniture, but of wearing apparel, money, rings, and other personal ornaments. Every place, in their line of march, experienced the effects of their rapacity.

Soon after the affair at Stono, the continental forces, under the command of Lincoln, retired to Sheldon, a healthy situation in the vicinity of Beaufort. Both armies remained in their respective encampments, till the arrival of a French fleet, on the coast, roused the whole country to immediate activity.

Count D’Estaing, after repairing his fleet at Boston, sailed for the West Indies. Having received instructions from the king his master, to act in concert with the forces of the



United States, and being strongly solicited by general Lincoln, president Lowndes, governor Rutledge, and Mr. Plumbard, consul of France, in Charleston, he sailed from the West Indies, September 1st, for the American continent, with expectation of rendering essential service, in operating against the common enemy. He arrived on the coast of Georgia, with a fleet consisting of twenty sail of the line, two of 50 guns, and eleven frigates. His appearance was so unexpected, that the Experiment man of war, of 50 guns, commanded by sir James Wallace, and three frigates, fell into his hands.

As soon as his arrival on the coast was known, general Lincoln, with the army under his command, marched for the vicinity of Savannah; and orders were given for the militia of Georgia and South Carolina to rendezvous near the same place. The British were equally diligent in preparing for their defence. Great numbers were employed, both by day and night, in strengthening and extending their lines. The American militia, flushed with the hope of speedily expelling the British from their southern possessions, turned out with an alacrity, which far surpassed their exertions in the preceding campaign. D'Estaign, before the arrival of Lincoln, demanded the surrender of the town to the arms of France. Prevost, in his answer, declined surrendering on a general summons, and requested that specific terms should be proposed, to which he would give an answer. The count replied, that it was the part of the besieged to propose terms. Prevost then asked for a suspension of hostilities twenty-four hours, for preparing proper terms. This was inconsiderately granted. Before the twenty-four hours elapsed, lieutenant colonel Maitland, with several hundred men, who had been stationed at Beaufort, made their way through many obstacles, and joined the royal army in Savannah. The garrison, encouraged by the arrival of so respectable a force, determined on resistance. The French and Americans, who formed a junction the evening after, were therefore reduced to the necessity of storming or besieging the garrison. The resolution of proceeding by siege being adopted,

several days were consumed in preparing for it, and in the meantime, the works of the garrison were hourly strengthened, by the labour of several hundred negroes, directed by that able engineer, major Moncrief. The besiegers, on the 4th of October, opened with nine mortars, thirty-seven pieces of cannon, from the land side, and fifteen from the water. Soon after the commencement of the cannonade, Prevost solicited for leave to send the women and children out of town. This was refused. The combined army suspected that, a desire of secreting the plunder, lately taken from the South Carolinians, was covered under the veil of humanity. It was also presumed that a refusal would expedite a surrender. On a report from the engineers, that a considerable time would be necessary to reduce the garrison by regular approaches, it was determined to make an assault. This measure was forced on count D'Estaing by his marine officers, who remonstrated against his continuing to risk so valuable a fleet, on a dangerous coast, in the hurricane season, and at so great a distance from the shore, that it might be surprised by a British fleet, completely repaired and fully manned. In a few days, the lines of the besiegers might have been carried, into the works of the besieged; but under these critical circumstances, no further delay could be admitted. To assault or raise the siege was the only alternative. Prudence would have dictated the latter: but a sense of honour determined the besiegers to adopt the former. Two feints were made with the country militia, and a real attack on Spring-hill battery, early in the morning of the 9th, with 3500 French troops, 600 continentals, and 350 of the inhabitants of Charleston. These boldly marched up to the lines, under the command of D'Estaing and Lincoln; but a heavy and well-directed fire from the batteries, and a cross-fire from the galleys, threw the front of their columns into confusion. Two standards were nevertheless planted on the British redoubts. A retreat of the assailants was ordered, after they had stood the enemy's fire for 55 minutes. Count D'Estaing and count Pulaski were both wounded. The former slightly; but the latter mortally. Six hundred and

thirty-seven of the French, and upwards of two hundred of the continentals and militia were killed or wounded. General Prevost, lieutenant colonel Maitland, and major Moncrief, deservedly acquired great reputation by this successful defence. The force of the garrison was between two and 3000, of which about 150 were militia. The damage sustained by the besieged was trifling, as they fired from behind works, and few of the assailants fired at all. Immediately after this unsuccessful assault, the militia, almost universally, went to their homes. Count D'Estaing re-embarked his troops and artillery, and left the continent.

While the siege of Savannah was pending, a remarkable enterprise was effected by colonel John White, of the Georgia line. Captain French had taken post with about 100 men near the river Ogechee, some time before the siege began. There were also at the same place, forty sailors on board of five British vessels, four of which were armed. All these men, together with the vessels and 130 stand of arms, were surrendered, October 1st, to colonel White, captain Elholm and four others, one of whom was the colonel's servant. On the preceding night, this small party kindled a number of fires in different places, and adopted the parade of a large encampment. By these, and a variety of deceptive stratagems, captain French was impressed with an opinion, that nothing but an instant surrender, in conformity to a peremptory summons, could save his men from being cut to pieces by a superior force. He therefore gave up, without making any resistance.

This visit of the fleet of his Most Christian Majesty to the coast of America, though unsuccessful as to its main object, was not without utility to the United States. It disconcerted the measures already digested by the British commanders, and caused a considerable waste of time, before they could determine on a new plan of operations. It also occasioned the evacuation of Rhode Island: but this was of no advantage to the United States. For, of all the blunders committed by the British in the course of the American war, none was greater than their stationing 6000 men, for two years and

eight months, on that island, where they were lost to every purpose of co-operation, and where they could render very little more service to the royal cause, than could have been afforded by a couple of frigates, cruising in the vicinity.

The siege being raised, the continental troops retreated over the river Savannah. The vicissitudes of an autumnal atmosphere made a severe impression on the irritable fibres of men, exhausted with fatigue, and dejected by defeat. In proportion to the towering hopes, with which the expedition was undertaken, was the depression of spirits subsequent to its failure. The Georgia exiles, who had assembled from all quarters to repossess themselves of their estates, were a second time obliged to flee from their country and possessions. The most gloomy apprehensions, respecting the southern states, took possession of the minds of the people.

Thus ended the southern campaign of 1779, without any thing decisive on either side. After one year, in which the British had over-run the state of Georgia, for 150 miles from the sea coast, and had penetrated as far as the lines of Charleston, they were reduced to their original limits in Savannah. All their schemes of co-operation with the tories had failed, and the spirits of that class of the inhabitants, by successive disappointments, were thoroughly broken.

The campaign of 1779 is remarkable for the feeble exertions of the Americans. Accidental causes, which had previously excited their activity, had in a great measure ceased to have influence. An enthusiasm for liberty made them comparatively disregard property, and brave all dangers in the first years of the war. The successes of their arms near the beginning of 1777, and the hopes of capturing Burgoyne's army in the close of it, together with the brisk circulation of a large quantity of paper money, in good credit, made that year both active and decisive. The flattering prospects inspired by the alliance with France in 1778, banished all fears of the success of the revolution: but the failure of every scheme of co-operation produced a despondency of mind



unfavourable to great exertions. Instead of driving the British out of the country, as the Americans vainly presumed, the campaigns of 1778 and 1779 terminated without any direct advantage, from the French fleet sent to their aid. Expecting too much from their allies, and then failing in these expectations, they were less prepared to prosecute the war with their own resources, than they would have been, if D'Estaing had not touched on their coast. Their army was reduced in its numbers, and badly clothed. In the first years of the war, the mercantile character was lost in the military spirit of the times: but in the progress of it, the inhabitants, cooling in their enthusiasm, gradually returned to their former habits of lucrative business. This made distinctions between the army and the citizens, and was unfriendly to military exertions. While several foreign events tended to the embarrassment of Great Britain, and indirectly to the establishment of independence, a variety of internal causes relaxed the exertions of the Americans; and for a time, made it doubtful, whether they would ultimately be independent citizens, or conquered subjects. Among these, the daily depreciation of their bills of credit, held a distinguished pre-eminence. This so materially affected every department, as to merit a particular discussion; which will be found in the appendix.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

*Of Indians and Expeditions into the Indian country.*

WHEN the English colonies were first planted in North America, the country was inhabited by numerous tribes of Indians, who principally supported themselves by fishing, hunting, and by the spontaneous productions of nature. The arts and arms of Europeans soon gave them an ascendancy over such untutored savages. Had the latter understood their interest, and been guided by a spirit of union, they would soon have expelled the invaders; and, in that case, they might now be flourishing, in the possession of their ancient territories and independence. By degrees, the old inhabitants were circumscribed within narrower limits; and, by some strange fatality, their numbers have been constantly lessening. The names of various nations, which, in the seventeenth century, boasted of several thousands, are now known only to those who are fond of curious researches. Many are totally extinct; and others can show no more than a few straggling individuals, the remnants of their fallen greatness. That so many tribes should, in so short a time, lose both their country and their national existence, is an event scarcely to be paralleled in the history of the world. Spirituous liquors, the small pox, and an abridgment of territory, to a people whose mode of life needed an extensive range, evils which chiefly resulted from the neighbourhood of Europeans, were among the principal causes of their destruction. The reflections, which are excited by reviewing the havoc, made among the native proprietors of this new world, are in some degree alleviated by its counterpart. While one set of inhabitants was insensibly dwindling away, another, improving in the arts of civil and social life, was growing in numbers, and rapidly filling up their places.\* As the emigrants from Europe, and

\* It has been computed, that five hundred civilized human beings may enjoy life in plenty and comfort, where only one savage drags out a miserable existence.

their dependents, extended their possessions on the sea coast, the Aborigines retired from it. By this gradual advance of the one, and retiring of the other, the former always presented an extensive frontier, to the incursions of the latter. The European emigrants, from an avidity for land, the possession of which is the ultimate object of human avarice, were prone to encroach on the territories of the Indians; while the Indians, from obvious principles of human nature, beheld with concern the descendants of the ancient proprietors circumscribed, in their territory, by the descendants of those strangers, whom their fathers had permitted to reside among them. From these causes, and especially from the licentious conduct of disorderly individuals, of both Indians and white people, there were frequent interruptions of the peace in their contiguous settlements.

In the war between France and England, which commenced in 1755, both parties paid assiduous attention to the Aborigines. The former succeeded in securing the greatest number of adherents; but the superior success of the latter, in the progress, and at the termination of the war, turned the current of Indian affections and interest in their favour. When the dispute between Great Britain and her colonies began to grow serious, the friendship of the Indians became a matter of consequence to both parties. Stretching for fifteen hundred miles along the whole north-western frontier of the colonies, they were to them desirable friends, and formidable enemies. As terror was one of the engines, by which Great Britain intended to enforce the submission of the colonies, nothing could be more conducive to the excitement of this passion, than the co-operation of Indians. Policy, not cruelty, led to the adoption of this expedient: but it was of that over-refined species which counteracts itself. In the competition for the friendship of the Indians, the British had advantages, far superior to any possessed by the colonists. The expulsion of the French from Canada, an event which had only taken place about thirteen years before, was still fresh in the memory of many of the savages, and had inspired them with high ideas of the martial superiority of the

**British troops.** The first steps taken by the congress, to oppose Great Britain, put it out of their power to gratify the Indians. Such was the effect of the non-importation agreement of 1774. While Great Britain had access to the principal Indian tribes, through Canada on the north, and Florida on the south, and was abundantly able to supply their many wants, the colonists had debarred themselves from importing the articles, which were necessary for the Indian trade.

It was unfortunate for the colonies, that, since the peace of Paris, 1763, the transactions with the Indians had been mostly carried on by superintendants, appointed and paid by the king of Great Britain. These, being under obligations to the crown, and expectants of further favours from it, generally used their influence with the Indians, in behalf of the mother country, and against the colonies. They insinuated into the minds of the uninformed savages, that the king was their natural protector, against the encroaching colonists; and that, if the latter succeeded in their opposition to Great Britain, they would next aim at the extirpation of their red neighbours. By such representations, seconded with a profusion of presents, the attachment of the Indians was pre-engaged, in support of the British interest.

The Americans were not unmindful of the savages on their frontier. They appointed commissioners to explain to them the grounds of their dispute, and to cultivate their friendship, by treaties and presents. They endeavoured to persuade the Indians, that the quarrel was, by no means, relative to them; and that, therefore, they should take part with neither side.

For the greater convenience of managing the intercourse between the colonies and the Indians, the latter were divided into three departments, the northern, southern, and middle; and commissioners were appointed for each. Congress also resolved to import and distribute among them a suitable assortment of goods, to the amount of 40,000*l* sterling, on account of the United States: but this was not executed. All the exertions of congress were insufficient for the security of their western frontiers. In almost every period of the war, a great majority of the Indians took part with Great Britain,



against the Americans. South Carolina was among the first of the states, which experienced the effects of British influence over the Indians. The Cherokees and Creeks inhabit lands, not far distant from the western settlements of Carolina and Georgia. The intercourse with these tribes had, for several years prior to the American war, been exclusively committed to John Stuart, an officer of the crown, and devoted to the royal interest. His great influence was wholly exerted in favour of Great Britain. A plan was settled by him, in concert with the king's governors, and other royal servants, to land a royal armed force in Florida, and to proceed with it to the western frontier of the southern states; and there, in conjunction with the tories and Indians, to fall on the friends of congress, at the same time that a fleet and army should invade them on the sea coast. The whole scheme was discovered, by the capture of Moses Kirkland, one of the principal agents employed in its execution, while he was on his way to general Gage with despatches, detailing the particulars, and soliciting the requisite aid to accomplish it. The possession of Kirkland, and of his papers, enabled the Americans to take such steps, as in a great degree frustrated the views of the royal servants; yet so much was carried into effect, that the Cherokees began their massacres, at the very time the British fleet attacked the fort on Sullivan's island. The undisturbed tranquility, which took place in South Carolina and the adjacent states, after the British had failed in their designs against them, in the spring and summer of 1776, gave an opportunity for carrying war into the Indian country. This was done, not so much to punish what was past, as to prevent all future co-operation between the Indians and British, in that quarter.

Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, sent, about the same time, a considerable force, which traversed the Indian settlements, burned their towns, and destroyed their fields of corn. Above five hundred of the Cherokees were obliged, from the want of provisions, to take refuge in Florida, and were there fed at the expense of the British government. These unfortunate, misled people sued

for peace, in the most submissive terms, and soon afterwards assented to a treaty, by which they ceded a considerable part of their land to South Carolina. The decision with which this expedition was conducted, intimidated the Cherokees, for some years, from further hostilities.

Very different was the case of those Indians, who were in the vicinity of the British posts, and contiguous to the frontier of the northern and middle states. The presents which they continually received from England, the industry of the British agents, and the influence of a great number of American refugees, who had taken shelter among them, operating on their native passion for rapine, excited them to frequent hostile excursions. Colonel John Butler, a Connecticut tory, and Brandt, a half Indian by blood, were the principal leaders of the savages in these expeditions. The vast extent of frontier, and remote situation of the settlements, together with the exact knowledge which the refugees possessed of the country, made it practicable, for even small parties to do extensive mischief.

A storm of Indian and tory vengeance burst with particular violence on Wyoming, a new and flourishing settlement, on the eastern branch of Susquehannah. Unfortunately for the security of the inhabitants, the soil was claimed both by Connecticut and Pennsylvania. From the collision of contradictory claims, founded on royal charters, the laws of neither weré steadily enforced. In this remote settlement, where government was feeble, the tories were under less control; and could easily assemble undiscovered. Nevertheless, twenty-seven of them were taken, and sent to Hartford, in Connecticut: but they were afterwards released. These and others of the same description, instigated by revenge against the Americans, from whom some of them had suffered banishment and loss of property, made a common cause with the Indians, and attacked the Wyoming settlement, with their combined forces, estimated at 1100 men, 900 of whom were Indians. The whole was commanded by colonel John Butler, a Connecticut tory. One of the forts, which had been constructed for the security of the inhabitants, being very

weak, surrendered to this party; but some of the garrison had previously retired to the principal fort at Kingston, called Forty-Fort. Colonel John Butler next demanded the surrender thereof. Colonel Zebulon Butler, a continental officer, who commanded, sent a message to him, proposing a conference at a bridge without the fort. This being agreed to, colonel Zebulon Butler, Dennison, and some other officers repaired to the place appointed; and they were followed by the whole garrison, a few invalids excepted. None of the enemy appeared. The Wyoming people advanced, and supposed that the enemy were retiring. They continued to march on, till they were about three miles from the fort. They then saw a few of the enemy, with whom they exchanged some shot: but they presently found themselves ambuscaded, and attacked by the whole body of Indians and Tories. They fought gallantly, till their retreat to the fort was cut off. Universal confusion ensued. Of 417, who had marched out of the fort, about 360 were instantly slain. No quarters were given. Colonel John Butler again demanded the surrender of Forty-Fort. This was agreed to, under articles of capitulation, by which the effects of the people therein were to be secured to them. The garrison, consisting of thirty men and two hundred women, were permitted to cross the Susquehannah, and retreat through the woods to Northampton county. The most of the other scattered settlers had previously retired, some through the woods to Northampton, others down the river to Northumberland. In this retreat, some women were delivered of children in the woods, and many suffered from want of provisions. Several of the settlers at Wyoming had erected good houses and barns, and made very considerable improvements. These and the other houses in the vicinity, were destroyed. Their horses, cattle, sheep and hogs, were for the most part killed, or driven away by the enemy.

A large proportion of the male inhabitants were, in one day, slaughtered. In a single engagement, near 200 women were made widows, and a much greater number of children were left fatherless.

Soon after the destruction of the Wyoming settlement, an expedition was carried on against the Indians by colonel Butler, of the Pennsylvania troops. He and his party, having gained the head of the Delaware, marched down the river for two days, and then struck across the country to the Susquehannah. They burnt or destroyed the Indian villages, both in that quarter, and the other settlements: but the inhabitants escaped. The destruction was extended for several miles, on both sides of the Susquehannah. The difficulties which colonel Butler's men encountered, in this expedition, were uncommonly great. They were obliged to carry provisions on their backs, and, thus loaded, frequently to wade through creeks and rivers. After the toil of a hard march, they were obliged to endure chilly nights, and heavy rains, without even the means of keeping their arms dry. They completed their business in sixteen days. About four weeks after colonel Butler's return, some hundreds of Indians, a large body of Tories, and about fifty regulars entered Cherry-Valley, within the state of New York. They made an unsuccessful attempt on Fort Alden; but they killed and scalped thirty-two of the inhabitants, mostly women and children; and also colonel Alden and ten soldiers.

An expedition which was to have taken place under Henry Hamilton, lieutenant governor of Detroit, fortunately for the Virginia back settlers, against whom it was principally directed, fell through, in consequence of the spirited conduct of colonel Clarke. The object of the expedition was extensive, and many Indians were engaged in it. Hamilton took post at St. Vincents, in the winter, to have all things in readiness, for invading the American settlements, as soon as the season of the year would permit. Clarke, on hearing that Hamilton had weakened himself, by sending away a considerable part of his Indians, against the frontier settlers, formed the resolution of attacking him, as the best expedient for preventing the mischiefs which were designed against his country. After surmounting many difficulties, he arrived with 130 men, unexpectedly at St. Vincents.

The inhabitants of the town immediately surrendered to



the Americans; and assisted them in taking the fort. The next day, Hamilton, with the garrison, were made prisoners of war, on articles of capitulation. Clarke, on hearing that a convoy of British goods and provisions was on its way from Detroit, detached a party of sixty men, which met them, and made prize of the whole. By this well-conducted and spirited attack on Hamilton, his intended expedition was nipped in the bud. Colonel Clarke transmitted to the council of Virginia, letters and papers, relating to lieutenant governor Hamilton, Philip de Jean, justice of peace for Detroit, and William Lamothe, captain of volunteers, whom he had made prisoners. The board reported, that Hamilton had incited the Indians to perpetrate their accustomed cruelties, on the defenceless inhabitants of the United States; had sent considerable detachments of Indians against the frontiers; had appointed a great council of them, to meet him and concert the operations of the ensuing campaign; had given standing rewards for scalps; and had treated American prisoners with cruelty. They also reported, that De Jean was the willing and cordial instrument of Hamilton, and that Lamothe was captain of the volunteer scalping parties of Indians and tories, who went out, from time to time, under general orders to spare neither men, women, nor children. They therefore considering them as fit objects, on whom to begin the work of retaliation, advised the governor to put them in irons; confine them in the dungeon of the public jail; debar them the use of pen, ink and paper; and exclude them from all converse, except with their keeper.

Colonel Goose Van Shaick, with fifty-five men, marched from Fort Schuyler to the Onandago settlements, and burned the whole, consisting of about fifty houses, together with a large quantity of provisions. Horses, and stock of every kind, were killed. The arms and ammunition of the Indians were either destroyed or brought off, and their settlements were laid waste. Twelve Indians were killed, and thirty-four made prisoners. This expedition was performed in less than six days, and without the loss of a single man.

In this manner, the savage part of the war was carried on

in America. Waste and, sometimes, cruelty were inflicted and retorted, with infinite variety of scenes of horror and disgust. The selfish passions of human nature, unrestrained by social ties, broke over all bounds of decency or humanity. The American refugees, who had fled to the western wilderness, indulged their passion for rapine, by assuming the colour and dress of Indians. At other times, they acted as guides, and conducted these merciless ravagers into such settlements, as afforded the most valuable booty, and the fairest prospect of escape. The savages, encouraged by British presents and agents, and led on by American refugees well acquainted with the country, and who cloaked the most consummate villainy under the specious name of loyalty, extended their depredations and murders far and near.

A particular detail of the devastation of property, of the distress of numbers who escaped, only by fleeing to the woods, where they subsisted, without covering, on the spontaneous productions of the earth, and of the barbarous murders which were committed on persons of every age and sex, would be sufficient to fill every breast with horror.

In sundry expeditions, which had been carried on against the Indians, ample vengeance had been taken on some of them; but these partial successes produced no lasting benefit. The few who escaped, had it in their power to make thousands miserable. For the permanent security of the frontier inhabitants, it was resolved, in the year 1779, to carry a decisive expedition into the Indian country. A considerable body of continental troops was selected for this purpose, and put under the command of general Sullivan. The Indians who form the confederacy of the six nations, commonly called the Mohawks, were the objects of this expedition. They inhabit that immense and fertile tract of country, which lies between New England, the middle states and the province of Canada. They had been advised by congress, and they had promised, to observe a neutrality in the war; but they soon departed from this line of conduct. The Oneidas and a few others were friends to the Americans; but a great majority took part decidedly against them.

Overcome by the presents and promises of sir John Johnson, and other British agents, and by their own native appetite for depredation, they invaded the frontiers, carrying slaughter and devastation wherever they went. From the vicinity of their settlements, to the inhabited parts of the United States, they facilitated the inroads of the more remote Indians. Much was therefore expected from their expulsion. When general Sullivan was on his way to the Indian country, he was joined by the American general Clinton, with upwards of 1000 men. The latter made his way down the Susquehannah, by a singular contrivance. The stream of water in that river was too low to float his batteaux. To remedy this inconvenience, he raised, with great industry, a dam across the mouth of the lake Otsego, which is one of the sources of the river Susquehannah. The lake, being constantly supplied by springs, soon rose to the height of the dam. General Clinton having got his batteaux ready, opened a passage through the dam for the water to flow. This raised the river so high, that he was enabled to embark all his troops, and to float them down to Tioga. By this exertion they soon joined Sullivan. The Indians, on hearing of the expedition projected against them, acted with firmness. They collected their strength, took possession of proper ground, and fortified it with judgment. General Sullivan attacked them in their works. They stood a cannonade for more than two hours; but then gave way. This engagement proved decisive. After the trenches were forced, the Indians fled without making any attempt to rally. The consternation occasioned among them by this defeat was so great, that they gave up all ideas of further resistance. As the Americans advanced into their settlements, the Indians retreated before them, without throwing any obstructions in their way. General Sullivan penetrated into the heart of the country inhabited by the Mohawks, and spread desolation every where. Many settlements in the form of towns were destroyed. All their fields of corn, and whatever was in a state of cultivation underwent the same fate. Scarcely any thing in the form of a house was left standing, nor was an Indian to be seen. To

the surprise of the Americans, they found the lands about the Indian towns well cultivated, and their houses both large and commodious. The quantity of corn destroyed was immense. Orchards, in which were several hundred fruit trees, were cut down; and of them many appeared to have been planted for a long series of years. Their gardens, replenished with a variety of useful vegetables, were laid waste. The Americans were so full of resentment against the Indians, for the many outrages they had suffered from them, and so bent on making the expedition decisive, that the officers and soldiers cheerfully agreed to remain, till they had fully completed the destruction of the settlement. The supplies obtained in the country lessened the inconvenience of short rations. The ears of corn were so remarkably large, that many of them measured twenty-two inches in length. Necessity suggested a novel expedient for pulverising the grains thereof. The soldiers perforated a few of their camp kettles with bayonets. The protrusions occasioned thereby formed a rough surface, and, by rubbing the ears of corn thereon, a coarse meal was produced, which was easily converted into agreeable nourishment.

The Indians, by this decisive expedition, being made to feel, in the most sensible manner, those calamities they were wont to inflict on others, became cautious and timid. The sufferings they had undergone, and the dread of a repetition of them, in case of their provoking the resentment of the Americans, damped the ardour of their warriors for making incursions into the American settlements. The frontiers, though not restored to perfect tranquility, experienced an exemption from a great proportion of the calamities, in which they had been lately involved.

Though these good consequences resulted from this expedition; yet, before its termination, several detached parties of Indians distressed different settlements in the United States. A party of sixty Indians, and twenty-seven white men, under Brandt, attacked the Minisink settlement, and burnt ten houses, twelve barns, a fort and two mills; and carried off much plunder, together with several prisoners.



The militia from Goshen and the vicinity, to the amount of 149, collected and pursued them; but with so little caution, that they were surprised and defeated. About this time, general Williamson and colonel Pickens, both of South Carolina, entered the Indian country, adjacent to the frontier of their state, burned and destroyed the corn of eight towns, and insisted upon the Indians removing immediately from their late habitations, into more remote settlements.

In the same month, colonel Broadhead engaged in a successful expedition against the Mingo, Munsey, and Seneca Indians. He left Pittsburg with 605 men, and was gone five weeks; in which time, he penetrated 200 miles from the fort, and destroyed a number of Indian huts and five hundred acres of corn.

The state of New York continued to suffer in its frontier, from Indians and their tory associates. These burnt fifty houses, and forty-seven barns, the principal part of Canioghary, a fine settlement about fifty-six miles from Albany. They also destroyed twenty-seven houses at Schoharie, and twenty at Normans creek. In about two months afterwards, they made a second irruption, and attacked Stone, Arabia, Canasioraga and Schohavic. At the same time, they laid waste a great extent of country about the Mohawk river, killed a number of the settlers, and made many prisoners.

The Cherokee Indians, having forgotten the consequences of provoking the Americans to invade their settlements, in the year 1776, made an incursion into Ninety-Six district, in South Carolina, massacred some families, and burned several houses. General Pickens, in 1781, collected a party of the militia, and penetrated into their country. This he accomplished in fourteen days, at the head of 394 horsemen. In that short space, he burned thirteen towns and villages, killed upwards of forty Indians, and took a number of prisoners. Not one of his party was killed, and only two were wounded. None of the expeditions against the Cherokees had been so rapid and decisive as this. The Americans did not expend three rounds of ammunition, and yet only three

Indians escaped, after having been once seen. On this occasion, a new and successful mode of fighting them was introduced. The American militia rushed forward on horseback, and charged the Indians with drawn swords. The vanquished Cherokees again sued for peace, in the most submissive terms, and obtained it; but not till they had promised, that instead of listening to the advice of the royalists, instigating them to war, they would deliver, to the authority of the state of South Carolina, all who should visit them on that errand.

Towards the end of the war, there was a barbarous and unprovoked massacre of some civilized Indians, who had been settled near the Muskingum. These, under the influence of some pious missionaries, of the Moravian persuasion, had been formed into some degree of civil and religious order. They abhorred war, and would take no part therein, giving for reason that, "the Great Being did not make men to destroy men; but to love and assist each other." From a love of peace, they advised those of their own colour, who were bent on war, to desist from it. They were also led from humanity, to inform the white people of their danger, when they knew that their settlements were about to be invaded. This provoked the hostile Indians to such a degree, that they carried these pacific people quite away from Muskingum, to a bank of Sandusky creek. They, finding corn dear and scarce in their new habitations, obtained liberty to come back, in the fall of the same year, to Muskingum, that they might collect the crops they had planted before their removal.

When the white people, at and near Monongahala, heard that a number of Indians were at the Moravian towns, on the Muskingum, they gave out that their intentions were hostile. Without any further inquiry, 160 of them crossed the Ohio, and put to death these harmless, inoffensive people, though they made no resistance. In conformity to their religious principles, these Moravians patiently submitted to their hard fate, without attempting to destroy their murderers. Upwards of ninety of this pacific race were killed by men, who,

while they called themselves Christians, were more deserving of the name of savages, than those whom they inhumanly murdered.

Soon after this unprovoked massacre, a party of Americans set out for Sandusky, to destroy the Indian towns in that part: but the Delawares, Wyandots, and other Indians opposed them. An engagement ensued, in which some of the white people were killed, and several were taken prisoners. Among the latter were colonel Crawford, and his son-in-law. The colonel was sacrificed to the manes of those Indians, who were massacred at the Moravian towns. The other prisoners were put to death with the tomahawk.

Throughout the American war, the desolation brought by the Indians, on the frontier settlements of the United States, and on the Indians by the Americans, was sufficient to excite compassion in the most obdurate hearts.

Not only men and warriors, but women and children, were indiscriminately murdered, while whole settlements were involved in promiscuous desolation. Each was made a scourge to the other; and the unavoidable calamities of war were rendered doubly distressing, by the addition of savage cruelties, to the most extensive devastation of those things, which conduce to the comfort of human life.

## CHAPTER XIX.

*Campaign of 1780 in the Southern States.*

THE successful defence of Savannah, together with the subsequent departure of count D'Estaing, from the coast of the United States, soon dissipated all apprehensions, 1780 previously entertained for the safety of New York.

These circumstances pointed out to sir Henry Clinton, the propriety of renewing offensive operations. Having effected nothing of importance, for the two preceding campaigns, he turned his attention southwardly, and regaled himself with flattering prospects of easy conquest, among the weaker states. The suitableness of the climate for winter operations, the richness of the country, and its distance from support, designated South Carolina as a proper object of enterprise. No sooner, therefore, was the departure of the French fleet known, than sir Henry Clinton committed the command of the royal army, in New York, to lieutenant general Kniphausen, and embarked for the southward with four flank battalions, twelve regiments, and a corps, British, Hessian and provincial, a powerful detachment of artillery, 250 cavalry, together with an ample supply of military stores and provisions. Vice-admiral Arbuthnot, with a suitable naval force, undertook to convey the troops to the place of their destination. After a tedious and dangerous passage, in which, part of their ordnance, most of their artillery, and all their cavalry horses were lost, the fleet arrived at Tybee in Georgia. In a few days, the transports, with the army on board, sailed from Savannah, for North-Edisto. After a short passage, on the 4th of February, 1780, the troops made good their landing, about thirty miles from Charleston, and took possession of John's Island and Stono ferry; and soon afterwards of James Island, and Wappoo-cut. A bridge was thrown over the canal, and part of the royal army took post on the banks of Ashley river, opposite to Charleston.



The assembly of the state was sitting when the British landed; but broke up after "delegating to governor Rutledge, and such of his council, as he could conveniently consult, a power to do every thing, necessary for the public good, except taking away the life of a citizen, without a legal trial." The governor immediately ordered the militia to rendezvous. Though the necessity was great, few obeyed the pressing call. A proclamation was issued by the governor, under his extraordinary powers, requiring such of the militia, as were regularly drafted, and all the inhabitants and owners of property in the town, to repair to the American standard, and join the garrison immediately, under pain of confiscation.

The tedious passage, from New York to Tybee, gave the Americans time to fortify Charleston. This, together with the losses, which the royal army had sustained, in the late tempestuous weather, induced sir Henry Clinton, to despatch an order to New York, for reinforcements of men and stores. He also directed major-general Prevost, to send on to him twelve hundred men, from the garrison of Savannah. Brigadier general Patterson, at the head of this detachment, made his way good over the river Savannah, and through the intermediate country; and, soon afterwards joined sir Henry Clinton, near the banks of Ashley river. The royal forces, without delay, proceeded to the siege. At Wappoo on James Island, they formed a depot, and erected fortifications, both on that island and on the main, opposite to the southern and western extremities of Charleston. An advanced party crossed Ashley river, and soon afterwards broke ground, at the distance of eleven hundred yards from the American works. At successive periods, they erected five batteries on Charleston neck. The garrison was equally assiduous, in preparing for its defence. The works, which had been previously thrown up, were strengthened and extended. Lines and redoubts were continued across, from Cooper to Ashley river. In front of the whole, was a strong abatis, and a wet ditch, made by passing a canal from the heads of swamps, which run in opposite directions. Between the

abbatis and the lines, deep holes were dug, at short intervals. The lines were made particularly strong, on the right and left, and so constructed, as to rake the wet ditch, in almost its whole extent. To secure the centre, a horn-work had been erected, which, being closed during the siege, formed a kind of citadel. Works were also thrown up on all sides of the town, where a landing was practicable. Though the lines were no more than field-works, yet sir Henry Clinton treated them with the respectful homage due to three parallels. From the 3d to the 10th of April, the first parallel was completed; and, immediately afterwards, the town was summoned to surrender. On the 12th, the batteries were opened, and, from that day, an almost incessant fire was kept up. About the time the batteries were opened, a work was thrown up, near Wando river, nine miles from town; and another, at Lem-priere's point, to preserve the communication with the country by water. A post was also ordered at a ferry over the Santee, to favour the coming in of reinforcements, or the retreat of the garrison when necessary. The British marine force, consisting of one ship of fifty guns, two of forty-four guns, four of thirty-two, and the Sandwich armed ship, crossed the bar in front of Rebellion road, and anchored in Five fathom Hole. The American force, opposed to this, was the Bricole, which, though pierced for forty-four guns, did not mount half of that number, two of thirty-two guns, one of twenty-eight, two of twenty-six, two of twenty, and the brig Notre Dame of sixteen guns. The first object of its commander, commodore Whipple, was to prevent admiral Arbuthnot from crossing the bar; but, on further examination, this was found to be impracticable. He therefore fell back to Fort Moultrie, and afterwards to Charleston. The crews and guns of all his vessels, except one, were put on shore to reinforce the batteries.

Admiral Arbuthnot, on the 9th of April, weighed anchor, at Five fathom Hole; and, with the advantage of a strong southerly wind, and flowing tide, passed Fort Moultrie, without stopping to engage it; and anchored near the remains of Fort Johnson. Colonel Pinckney, who commanded on Sulli-

van's Island, kept up a brisk and well-directed fire, on the ships in their passage. To prevent the royal armed vessels, from running into Cooper river, eleven vessels were sunk in the channel, opposite to the exchange. The batteries of the besiegers soon obtained a superiority, over those of the town. The former had twenty-one mortars and royals; the latter only two. The regular force, in the garrison, was much inferior to that of the besiegers. Few of the militia could be persuaded to leave their plantations, and reinforce their brethren in the capital. A camp was formed at Monk's corner, to keep up the communication between the town and country; and the militia without the lines, were requested to rendezvous there; but this was surprised, and routed by lieutenant colonel Tarleton. The British, having now less to fear, extended themselves to the eastward of Cooper river. Two hundred and fifty horse, and 600 infantry were detached on this service; but, nevertheless, the weak state of the garrison made it improper to detach a number, sufficient to attack that small force. About this time, sir Henry Clinton received a reinforcement of 3000 men, from New York. A council of war agreed that, "a retreat would be attended with many distressing inconveniences, if not altogether impracticable;" and advised, "that offers of capitulation, before their affairs became more critical, should be made to general Clinton, which might admit of the army's withdrawing, and afford security to the persons and property of the inhabitants." These terms, being proposed, were instantly rejected; but the garrison adhered to them, in hopes that succours would arrive from the neighbouring states. The bare offer of capitulating dispirited the garrison; but they continued to resist, in expectation of favourable events. The British speedily completed the investiture of the town, both by land and water. After admiral Arbuthnot had passed Sullivan's Island, colonel Pinckney, and 150 of the men under his command, were withdrawn from that post to Charleston. The fort on the island was surrendered on the 6th of May, without opposition, to captain Hudson of the royal navy. On the same day, the remains of the

American cavalry which escaped from the late surprise at Monk's corner, were again surprised by lieutenant colonel Tarleton, at Lancoan's ferry, on Santee; and the whole were either killed, captured or dispersed. While every thing prospered with the British, sir Henry Clinton began a correspondence with general Lincoln, and renewed his former offers to the garrison, in case of their surrender. Lincoln was disposed to close with them, as far as they respected his army; but some demur was made, with a view of gaining better terms for the citizens, which, it was hoped, might be obtained on a conference. This was asked: but Clinton, instead of granting it, answered, "that hostilities should recommence at eight o'clock." Nevertheless, neither party fired till nine. The garrison then re-commenced hostilities. The besiegers immediately followed; and each cannonaded the other, with unusual briskness. The British batteries of the third parallel opened on this occasion. Shells and carcasses were thrown, into almost all parts of the town, and several houses were burned. The cannon and mortars played on the garrison, at a less distance than a hundred yards. The Hessian chasseurs were so near the American lines, that, with their rifles, they could easily strike any object on them. The British, having crossed the wet ditch by sap, advanced within twenty-five yards of the American works, and were ready for making a general assault by land and water. All expectation of succour was at an end. The only hope left was, that 9000 men, the flower of the British army, seconded by a naval force, might fail in storming extensive lines, defended by less than 3000 men. Under these circumstances, the siege was protracted till the 11th of May. On that day, a great number of the citizens addressed general Lincoln in a petition, expressing their acquiescence in the terms, which sir Henry Clinton had offered, and requested his acceptance of them. On the reception of this petition, general Lincoln wrote to sir Henry, and offered to accept the terms before proposed. The royal commanders, wishing to avoid the extremity of a storm, and unwilling to press to unconditional submission an enemy, whose friendship they



wished to conciliate, returned a favourable answer. A capitulation was signed on the 12th of May, and major general Leslie took possession of the town, on the next day. The loss on both sides during the siege was nearly equal. Of the king's troops, 76 were killed, and 189 wounded. Of the Americans, 89 were killed, and 140 wounded. Upwards of 400 pieces of artillery were surrendered. By the articles of capitulation, the garrison was to march out of town, and deposit their arms in front of the works; but the drums were not to beat a British march, nor the colours to be uncased. The continental troops and seamen were to keep their baggage, and remain prisoners of war, till exchanged. The militia were to be permitted to return to their respective homes, as prisoners on parole; and, while they adhered to their parole, were not to be molested by the British troops, in person or property. The inhabitants of all conditions were to be considered, as prisoners on parole, and to hold their property, on the same terms with the militia. The officers of the army and navy were to retain their servants, swords, pistols, and baggage unsearched. They were permitted to sell their horses; but not to remove them. A vessel was allowed to proceed to Philadelphia, with general Lincoln's despatches unopened.

The numbers which surrendered prisoners of war, inclusive of the militia, and every adult male inhabitant, were above 5000; but the proper garrison, at the time of the surrender, did not exceed 2500. The precise number of privates, in the continental army, was 1977; of which number 500 were in the hospitals. The captive officers were much more in proportion than the privates, and consisted of one major general, six brigadiers, nine colonels, fourteen lieutenant colonels, fifteen majors, eighty-four captains, eighty-four lieutenants, thirty-two second lieutenants and ensigns. The gentlemen of the country, who were mostly militia officers, from a sense of honour, repaired to the defence of Charleston, though they could not bring with them privates, equal to their respective commands. The regular regiments were fully officered, though greatly deficient in privates.

This was the first instance, in which the Americans had attempted to defend a town. The unsuccessful event, with its consequences, demonstrated the policy of sacrificing the towns of the union, in preference to endangering the whole, by risking too much for their defence.

Much censure was undeservedly cast on general Lincoln, for attempting the defence of Charleston. Though the contrary plan was in general the best, he had particular reasons to justify his deviation from the example of the commander in chief of the American army. Charleston was the only considerable town, in the southern extremity of the confederacy, and, for its preservation, South Carolina and the adjacent states seemed willing to make great exertions. The reinforcements, promised for its defence, were fully sufficient for that purpose. The congress, and the states of North and South Carolina, gave general Lincoln ground to expect an army of 9900 men, to second his operations: but, from a variety of causes, this army, including the militia, was little more than one-third of that number. As long as an evacuation was practicable, he had such assurances of support, that he could not attempt it with propriety. Before he could be ascertained of the futility of these assurances, the British had taken such a position, that a retreat could not be successfully made.

Shortly after the surrender, the commander in chief adopted sundry measures to induce the inhabitants to return to their allegiance. It was stated to them, in a hand-bill, which, though without a name, seemed to flow from authority, "that the helping hand of every man was wanting, to re-establish peace and good government; that the commander in chief wished not to draw them into danger, while any doubt could remain of his success: but, as that was now certain, he trusted that one and all would heartily join, and give effect to necessary measures for that purpose." Those who had families were informed, "that they would be permitted to remain at home, and form a militia, for the maintenance of peace and good order: but, from those who had no families, it was expected, that they would cheerfully assist, in driving

their oppressors, and all the miseries of war, from their borders." To such it was promised, "that, when on service, they would be allowed pay, ammunition, and provisions, in the same manner as the king's troops." About the same time, sir Henry Clinton, in a proclamation, declared, "that if any person should thenceforward appear in arms, in order to prevent the establishment of his majesty's government in that country, or should, under any pretence or authority whatever, attempt to compel any other person or persons so to do, or should hinder the king's faithful subjects from joining his forces, or from performing those duties their allegiance required, such persons should be treated with the utmost severity, and their estates be immediately seized for confiscation." Sir Henry Clinton and admiral Arbutnot, in the character of commissioners for restoring peace, offered to the inhabitants, with some exceptions, "pardon for their past treasonable offences, and a reinstatement in the possession of all those rights and immunities, which they heretofore had enjoyed, under a free British government, exempt from taxation, except by their own legislatures."

The capital having surrendered, the next object with the British was, to secure the general submission of the whole body of the people.

To this end, they posted garrisons in different parts of the country, to awe the inhabitants. They also marched, with upwards of 2000 men, towards North Carolina. This caused an immediate retreat of some parties of Americans, who had advanced into the northern extremity of South Carolina, with the expectation of relieving Charleston. Among the corps which had come forward, with that view, there was one commanded by colonel Buford, which consisted of three or four hundred continental infantry, and a few horsemen. Colonel Tarleton, with about seven hundred horse and foot, advanced in front of the British army, in quest of this party. After a rapid march of one hundred miles, in fifty-four hours, he came up with them, at the Waxhaws, and demanded their surrender. This being refused, an action ensued. Buford committed two capital mistakes in this affair. One was, send-

ing his waggons and artillery away, before the engagement. The waggons might have served as a breast-work, to defend his men against the attacks of the cavalry. Another mistake was, ordering his men not to fire, till the enemy were within ten yards. A single discharge made but little impression, on the advancing British horsemen. Before it could be repeated, the assailants were in contact with their adversaries, cutting them down with their sabres. The Americans, finding resistance useless, sued for quarters; but their submission produced no cessation of hostilities. Some of them, after they had ceased to resist, lost their hands; others their arms; and almost every one was mangled with a succession of wounds. The charge was urged, till five in six of the whole number of the Americans were, by Tarleton's official account of this bloody scene, either killed or so badly wounded, as to be incapable of being moved from the field of battle: and, by the same account, this took place, though they made such ineffectual opposition, as only to kill five, and wound twelve of the British. Lord Cornwallis bestowed on Tarleton high encomiums, for this enterprise, and recommended him, in a special manner, to royal favour. This barbarous massacre gave a more sanguinary turn to the war. Tarleton's quarters became proverbial; and, in the subsequent battles, a spirit of revenge gave a keener edge to military resentment.

Sir Henry Clinton, having left about 4000 men for the southern service, embarked, early in June, with the main army for New York. On his departure, the command devolved on lieutenant general Cornwallis. The season of the year, the condition of the army, and the unsettled state of South Carolina, impeded the immediate invasion of North Carolina. Earl Cornwallis despatched instructions to the principal loyalists, in that state, to attend to the harvest, prepare provisions, and remain quiet. His lordship committed the care of the frontier to lord Rawdon, and, repairing to Charleston, devoted his principal attention to the commercial and civil regulations of South Carolina. In the meantime, the impossibility of fleeing with their families and effects, and the want of an army, to which the militia of the



states might repair, induced the people in the country, to abandon all schemes of further resistance. At Beaufort, Camden, and Ninety-Six, they generally laid down their arms, and submitted either as prisoners or as subjects. Excepting the extremities of the state, bordering on North Carolina, the inhabitants, who did not flee out of the country, preferred submission to resistance. This was followed by an unusual calm, and the British believed, that the state was thoroughly conquered. An opportunity was now given, to make an experiment, from which much was expected, and for the omission of which, sir Henry Clinton's predecessor, sir William Howe, had been severely censured. It had been confidently asserted, that a majority of the Americans were well affected to the British government, and that under proper regulations, substantial service might be expected from them, in restoring the country to peace. At this crisis, every bias in favour of congress was removed. Their armies in the southern states, were either captured or defeated. There was no regular force to the southward of Pennsylvania, which was sufficient to awe the friends of royal government. Every encouragement was held forth, to those of the inhabitants, who would with arms support the old constitution. Confiscation and death were threatened as the consequence of opposing its re-establishment. While there was no regular army, within four hundred miles, to aid the friends of independence, the British were in force, posted over all the country. The people were thus left to themselves, or rather strongly impelled to abandon an apparently sinking cause, and arrange themselves on the side of the conquerors. Under these favourable circumstances, the experiment was made, for supporting the British interest by the exertion of loyal inhabitants, unawed by American armies, or republican demagogues. It soon appeared, that the disguise, which fear had imposed, subsisted no longer than the present danger, and that the minds of the people, though overawed, were actuated by an hostile spirit. In prosecuting the scheme for obtaining a military aid from the inhabitants, that tranquillity, which previous successes had procured, was disturbed,

and that ascendancy, which arms had gained, was interrupted. The inducement to submission with many was, a hope of obtaining a respite from the calamities of war, under the shelter of British protection. Such were not less astonished than confounded, on finding themselves virtually called upon, to take arms in support of royal government. This was done in the following manner. After the inhabitants, by the specious promises of protection and security, had generally submitted as subjects, or taken their parole as prisoners of war, a proclamation was issued by sir Henry Clinton which set forth, “that it was proper for all persons to take an active part, in settling and securing his majesty’s government; that all the inhabitants of the province, who were then prisoners on parole, those taken in Fort Moultrie and Charleston, and such as were in actual confinement excepted, should, from and after the 20th of June, be freed from their paroles, and restored to all the rights and duties belonging to citizens and inhabitants; and that all persons under the description above mentioned, who should afterwards neglect to return to their allegiance, and to his majesty’s government, should be considered as enemies and rebels to the same, and treated accordingly.” It was designed by this arbitrary change of the political condition of the inhabitants, to bring them into a dilemma, which would force them to take an active part in settling and securing the royal government. It involved a majority in the necessity of either fleeing out of the country, or of becoming a British militia. With this proclamation, the declension of British authority commenced; for though the inhabitants, from motives of fear or convenience, had generally submitted, the greatest part of them retained an affection for their American brethren, and shuddered at the thought of taking arms against them. Among such it was said, “if we must fight, let it be on the side of America, our friends and countrymen.” A great number, considering this proclamation as a discharge from their paroles, armed themselves in self-defence, being induced thereto, by the royal menaces, that they who did not return to their allegiance, as British subjects, must expect to be treated as rebels. A

greater number, from being in the power of the British, exchanged their paroles as prisoners, for the protection of subjects: but this was done in many cases, with a secret reservation of breaking the compulsory engagement, when a proper opportunity should present itself.

A party, always attached to royal government, though they had conformed to the laws of the state, rejoiced in the ascendancy of the royal arms; but their number was inconsiderable, in comparison with the multitude who were obliged by necessity, or induced by convenience, to accept of British protection.

The precautions, taken to prevent the rising of the royalists in North Carolina, did not answer the end. Several of the inhabitants of Tryon county, under the direction of colonel Moore, took up arms, and were, in a few days, defeated by the whig militia, commanded by general Rutherford. Colonel Bryan, another loyalist, though equally injudicious as to time, was successful. He reached the 71st regiment stationed in the Cheraws, with about 800 men, assembled from the neighbourhood of the river Yadkin.

While the conquerors were endeavouring to strengthen the party for royal government, the Americans were not inattentive to their interests. Governor Rutledge, who, during the siege of Charleston, had been requested by general Lincoln to go out of town, was industriously and successfully negotiating with North Carolina, Virginia, and congress, to obtain a force for checking the progress of the British arms. Representations, to the same effect, had also been made in due time by general Lincoln. Congress ordered a considerable detachment from their main army, to be marched to the southward. North Carolina also ordered a large body of militia to take the field. As the British advanced to the upper country of South Carolina, a considerable number of determined whigs retreated before them, and took refuge in North Carolina. In this class was colonel Sumter, a distinguished partisan, who was well qualified for conducting military operations. A party of exiles, from South Carolina, made choice of him for their leader. At the head of this

little band of freemen, he returned to his own state, and took the field against the victorious British, after the inhabitants had generally abandoned all ideas of further resistance. This unexpected impediment to the extension of British conquests, roused all the passions, which disappointed ambition can inspire. Previous successes had flattered the royal commanders, with hopes of distinguished rank, among the conquerors of America; but the renewal of hostilities obscured the pleasing prospect. Flushed with the victories they had gained in the first of the campaign, and believing every thing told them, favourable to their wishes, to be true, they conceived, that they had little to fear on the south side of Virginia. When experience refuted these hopes, they were transported with indignation against the inhabitants, and confined several of them, on suspicion of their being accessory to the re-commencement of hostilities.

The first effort of renewed warfare was on July 12th, two months after the fall of Charleston, when 133 of colonel Sumter's corps attacked and routed a detachment of the royal forces and militia, which were posted in a laue at Williamson's plantation. This was the first advantage gained over the British, since their landing, in the beginning of the year. The steady, persevering friends of America, who were very numerous in the north-western frontier of South Carolina, turned out with great alacrity, to join colonel Sumter; though opposition to the British government had entirely ceased, in every other part of the state. His troops, in a few days, amounted to 600 men. With this increase of strength, he made a spirited attack on a party of the British, at Rocky Mount: but as he had no artillery, and they were secured under cover of earth, filled in between logs, he could make no impression upon them, and was obliged to retreat. Sensible that the minds of men are influenced by enterprise, and that, to keep militia together, it is necessary to employ them, this active partisan attacked another of the royal detachments, consisting of the Prince of Wales's regiment, and a large body of tories, posted at the Hanging-rock. The Prince of Wales's regiment was almost totally destroyed.



From 278, it was reduced to nine. The loyalists, who were of that party which had advanced from North Carolina, under colonel Bryan, were dispersed. The panic occasioned by the fall of Charleston daily abated. The whig militia, on the extremities of the state, formed themselves into parties, under leaders of their own choice, and sometimes attacked detachments of the British army, but more frequently those of their own countrymen, who, as a royal militia, were co-operating with the king's forces. While Sumter kept up the spirits of the people, by a succession of gallant enterprises, a respectable continental force was advancing through the middle states, for the relief of their southern brethren. With the hopes of relieving Charleston, orders were given for the Maryland and Delaware troops to march from general Washington's head quarters, to South Carolina; but the quarter master general was unable to put this detachment in motion, as soon as was intended.

The manufacturers, employed in providing for the army, would neither go on with their business, nor deliver the articles they had completed; declaring they had suffered so much from the depreciation of the money, that they would not part with their property without immediate payment. Under these embarrassing circumstances, the southern states required an aid from the northern army, to be marched through the intermediate space of eight hundred miles. The Maryland and Delaware troops were, with great exertions, at length enabled to move. After marching through Jersey and Pennsylvania, they embarked at the head of Elk, landed soon afterwards at Petersburg, and thence proceeded through the country towards South Carolina. This force was at first put under the command of major general Baron de Kalb, and afterwards of general Gates. The success of the latter, in the northern campaigns of 1776 and 1777, induced many to believe, that his presence, as commander of the southern army, would re-animate the friends of independence. While Baron de Kalb commanded, a council of war had advised him to file off from the direct road to Camden, towards the well-cultivated settlements in the vicinity of the

Waxhaws: but general Gates, on taking the command, did not conceive this movement to be necessary; supposing it to be most for the interest of the states, that he should proceed immediately with his army, on the shortest road, to the vicinity of the British encampments. This led through a barren country, in passing over which, the Americans severely felt the scarcity of provisions. Their murmurs became audible, and there were strong appearances of mutiny: but the officers, who shared every calamity in common with the privates, interposed, and conciliated them to a patient sufferance of their hard lot. They principally subsisted on lean cattle, picked up in the woods. The whole army was under the necessity of using green corn, and peaches, in the place of bread. They were subsisted for several days on the latter alone. Dysenteries became common, in consequence of this diet. The heat of the season, the unhealthiness of the climate, together with insufficient and unwholesome food, threatened destruction to the army. The common soldiers, instead of desponding, began after some time to be merry with their misfortunes. They used "starvation" as a cant word, and vied with each other in burlesquing their situation. The wit and humour, displayed on the occasion, contributed not a little to reconcile them to their sufferings. The American army, having made its way through a country of pine-barrens, sand-hills, and swamps, reached Clermont, thirteen miles from Camden, on the 13th of August. The next day, general Stephens arrived with a large body of Virginia militia.

As the American army approached South Carolina, lord Rawdon concentrated his force at Camden. The retreat of the British from their out-posts, the advances of the American army, and the impolitic conduct of the conquerors towards their new subjects, concurred, at this juncture, to produce a general revolt in favour of congress. The people were daily more dissatisfied with their situation. Tired of war, they had submitted to British government, with the expectation of bettering their condition; but they soon found their mistake. The greatest address should have been practised towards the inhabitants, in order to second the views of the

parent state, in re-uniting the revolted colonies to her government. That the people might be induced to return to the condition of subjects, their minds and affections, as well as their armies, ought to have been conquered. This delicate task was rarely attempted. The officers, privates, and followers of the royal army, were generally more intent on amassing fortunes by plunder and rapine, than on promoting a re-union of the dissevered members of the empire. Instead of increasing the number of real friends to royal government, they disgusted those that they found. The high-spirited citizens of Carolina, impatient of their rapine and insolence, rejoiced in the prospect of freeing their country from its oppressors. Motives of this kind, together with a prevailing attachment to the cause of independence, induced many to break through all ties, to join general Gates; and more to wish him the completest success.

General Gates, on reaching the frontier of South Carolina, issued a proclamation inviting the patriotic citizens, "to join heartily in rescuing themselves and their country, from the oppression of a government, imposed on them, by the ruffian hand of conquest." He also gave "assurances of forgiveness and perfect security, to such of the unfortunate citizens as had been induced, by the terror of sanguinary punishment, the menace of confiscation, and the arbitrary measures of military domination, apparently to acquiesce under the British government, and to make a forced declaration of allegiance and support to a tyranny, which the indignant souls of citizens, resolved on freedom, inwardly revolted at with horror and detestation;" excepting from this amnesty, only "those who, in the hour of devastation, had exercised acts of barbarity and depredation, on the persons and property of their fellow citizens." The army, with which Gates advanced, was, by the arrival of Stephens's militia, increased nearly to 4000 men; but of this large number, the whole regular force was only 900 infantry, and 70 cavalry. On the approach of Gates, earl Cornwallis hastened from Charleston to Camden, and arrived there on the 14th of August. The force, which his lordship found collected on his

arrival, was 1700 infantry, and 300 cavalry. This inferior number would have justified a retreat; but he chose rather to stake his fortune on the decision of a battle. On the night of the 15th, he marched from Camden with his whole force, intending to attack the Americans in their camp at Clermont. In the same night, Gates, after ordering his baggage to the Waxhaws, put his army in motion, with an intention of advancing to an eligible position, about eight miles from Camden. The American army was ordered to march at ten o'clock P. M. in the following order: colonel Armand's advance cavalry; colonel Potterfield's light infantry, on the right flank of colonel Armand, in Indian-file, two hundred yards from the road; major Armstrong's light infantry, in the same order as colonel Potterfield's; on the left flank of the legion, advanced guard of foot, composed of the advanced picquets; first brigade of Maryland; second brigade of Maryland; division of North Carolina; Virginia rear guard; volunteer cavalry, upon the flanks of the baggage, equally divided. The light infantry upon each flank were ordered to march up and support the cavalry, if it should be attacked by the British cavalry; and colonel Armand was directed, in that case, to stand the attack at all events.

The advance of both armies met in the night, and engaged. Some of the cavalry of Armand's legion, being wounded in the first fire, fell back on others, who recoiled so suddenly, that the first Maryland regiment was broken, and the whole line of the army was thrown into confusion. This first impression struck deep, and dispirited the militia. The American army soon recovered its order. Both they and their adversaries kept their ground, and occasionally skirmished through the night. Colonel Potterfield, a most excellent officer, on whose abilities general Gates particularly depended, was wounded in the early part of this night attack. In the morning, a severe and general engagement took place. At the first onset, the great body of the Virginia militia, who formed the left wing of the army, on being charged with fixed bayonets, by the British infantry, threw down their arms, and with the utmost precipitation fled from the field.



A considerable part of the North Carolina militia followed the unworthy example ; but the continentals, who formed the right wing of the army, inferior as they were in numbers to the British, stood their ground and maintained the conflict, with great resolution. Never did men acquit themselves better. For some time, they had the advantage of their opponents, and were in possession of a considerable body of prisoners. Overpowered at last by numbers, and nearly surrounded by the enemy, they were compelled reluctantly to leave the ground. In justice to the North Carolina militia, it should be remarked, that part of the brigade commanded by general Gregory acquitted themselves well. They were formed immediately on the left of the continentals, and kept the field while they had a cartridge to fire. General Gregory himself was twice wounded, by a bayonet, in bringing off his men ; and several of his brigade, who were made prisoners, had no wounds except from bayonets.\* Two hundred and ninety American wounded prisoners were carried into Camden, after this action, 206 of whom were continentals, 82 were North Carolina militia, and two were Virginia militia. The resistance made by each corps, may, in some degree, be estimated from the number of wounded. The Americans lost the whole of their artillery, eight field pieces, upwards of two hundred waggons, and the greatest part of their baggage. Almost all their officers were separated from their respective commands. Every corps was broken in action, and dispersed. The fugitives, who fled by the common road, were pursued above twenty miles by the horse of Tarleton's legion ; and the way was covered with arms, baggage, and waggons. Baron de Kalb, the second in command, a brave and experienced officer, was taken prisoner, and died on the next day, of his wounds. He was a German by birth, but had long been in the French service. Congress resolved, that a monument should be erected to his memory, in Annapolis, with a very honourable inscription. General

\* This detail was furnished by Dr. Williamson, surgeon-general of the North Carolina militia, who, after the battle, went into Camden with a flag.

Rutherford, of North Carolina, was wounded, and taken prisoner.

The royal army fought with great bravery; but the completeness of their victory was, in a great degree, owing to their superiority in cavalry, and the precipitate flight of the American militia. Their whole loss is supposed to have amounted to some hundreds. To add to the distresses of the Americans, the defeat of Gates was immediately followed, by the surprise and dispersion of Sumter's corps. While the former was advancing near to the British army, the latter, who had previously taken post between Camden and Charleston, took a number of prisoners, and captured sundry British stores, together with their convoy. On hearing of the defeat of his superior officers, he began to retreat with his prisoners and stores. Tarleton with his legion, and a detachment of infantry, pursued with such celerity and address, as to overtake and surprise this party, at Fishing creek. The British rode into their camp, before they were prepared for defence. The retreating Americans, having been four days with little or no sleep, were more obedient to the calls of nature, than attentive to her first law, self-preservation. Sumter had taken every prudent precaution to prevent a surprise; but his videttes were so overcome with fatigue, that they neglected their duty. With great difficulty he prevailed on a few to stand their ground, for a short time; but the greater part of his corps fled to the river, or the woods. He lost all his artillery; and his whole detachment was either killed, captured or dispersed. The prisoners, he had lately taken, were all retaken. On the 17th and 18th of August, about 150 of Gates's army rendezvoused at Charlotte. These had reason to apprehend, that they would be immediately pursued, and cut to pieces. There was no magazine of provisions in the town, and it was without any kind of defence. It was, therefore, concluded to retreat to Salisbury. A circumstantial detail of this retreat would be the picture of complicated wretchedness. There were more wounded men than could be conveniently carried off. The inhabitants, hourly expecting the British to advance into their settlement, and generally in-

tending to flee, could not attend to the accommodation of the suffering soldiers. Objects of distress occurred in every quarter. There were many who stood in need of kind assistance; but there were few who could give it. Several men were to be seen with but one arm; and some without any. Anxiety, pain and dejection, poverty, hurry and confusion, marked the gloomy scene. Under these circumstances, the remains of that numerous army, which had lately caused such terror to the friends of Great Britain, retreated to Salisbury, and soon afterwards to Hillsborough. General Gates had previously retired to the latter place; and was there, in concert with the government of North Carolina, devising plans of defence, and for renewing military operations.

Though there was no army to oppose lord Cornwallis, yet the season, and bad health of his army, restrained him from pursuing his conquests. By the complete dispersion of the continental forces, the country was in his power. The present moment of triumph seemed, therefore, the most favourable conjuncture, for breaking the spirits of those who were attached to independence. To prevent their future co-operation with the armies of congress, a severer policy was henceforward adopted.

Unfortunately for the inhabitants, this was taken up on grounds, which involved thousands in distress, and not a few in the loss of life. The British conceived themselves in possession of the rights of sovereignty, over a conquered country, and that, therefore, the efforts of the citizens, to assert their independence, exposed them to the penal consequences of treason and rebellion. Influenced by these opinions, and transported with indignation against the inhabitants, they violated the rights, held sacred between independent hostile nations. Orders were given by lord Cornwallis, "that all the inhabitants of the province, who had submitted, and who had taken part in this revolt, should be punished with the greatest rigour; that they should be imprisoned; and that their whole property be taken from them, or destroyed." He also ordered, in the most positive manner, "that every militia man, who had borne arms with the British, and after-

wards joined the Americans, should be put to death." At Augusta, at Camden, and elsewhere, several of the inhabitants were hanged, in consequence of these orders. The men who suffered had been compelled by the necessities of their families, and the prospect of saving their property, to make an involuntary submission to the royal conquerors. Experience soon taught them the inefficacy of these submissions. This, in their opinion, absolved them from their obligations to support the royal cause, and left them at liberty to follow their inclinations. To treat men thus circumstanced, with the severity of punishment, usually inflicted on deserters and traitors, might have a political tendency to discourage further revolts; but the impartial world must regret, that the unavoidable horrors of war should be aggravated, by such deliberate effusions of human blood.

Notwithstanding the decisive superiority of the British armies, in South Carolina, several of the most respectable citizens, though in the power of their conquerors, resisted every temptation to resume the character of subjects. To enforce a general submission, orders were given by lord Cornwallis, immediately after this victory, to send out of South Carolina a number of its principal citizens. Lieutenant governor Gadsden, most of the civil and militia officers, and some others,\* who had declined exchanging their paroles, for the protection of British subjects, were taken up, put on board a vessel in the harbour, and sent to St. Augustine. General Moultrie remonstrated against the confinement and removal of these gentlemen, as contrary to their rights, derived from the capitulation of Charleston. They, at the same time, challenged their adversaries to prove, that any part of

\* Their names were: Edward Blake, John Budd, Robert Cochran, John Edwards, Thomas Ferguson, George Flagg, William Hasell Gibbes, William Hall, Thomas Hall, Thomas Heyward, jr. Isaac Holmes, Richard Hutson, William Johnson, Rev. John Lewis, William Livingston, John Loveday, Richard Lushington, William Massey, Edward McBreedy, Alexander Moultrie, John Mowatt, John Neufville, Edward North, Joseph Parker, John Ernest Poyas, David Ramsay, Jacob Read, Hugh Rutledge, Edward Rutledge, John Sansum, Thomas Savage, Thomas Singleton, Josiah Smith, James Hamden Thomson, Peter Timothy, John Todd, and Anthony Toomer.



their conduct merited expulsion from their country and families. They received no further satisfaction, than that the measure had been "adopted from motives of policy." To convince the inhabitants, that the conquerors were seriously resolved to remove from the country, all who refused to become subjects, an additional number of about thirty citizens\* of South Carolina, who remained prisoners on parole, were sent off to the same place, in less than three months. General Rutherford and colonel Isaacs, both of North Carolina, who had been lately taken near Camden, were associated with them.

To compel the re-establishment of British government, lord Cornwallis, in about four weeks after his victory, issued a proclamation, for the sequestration of all estates, belonging to the active friends of independence. By this, he constituted "John Cruden commissioner, with full power and authority, on the receipt of an order or warrant, to take into his possession the estates, both real and personal, not included in the capitulation of Charleston, of those in the service, or acting under the authority of the rebel congress; and also the estates, both real and personal, of those persons who, by an open avowal of rebellious principles, or by other notorious acts, manifesting a wicked and desperate perseverance, in opposing the re-establishment of his majesty's just and lawful authority." It was further declared, "that any person or persons obstructing or impeding the said commissioner, in the execution of his duty, by the concealment, or removal of property, or otherwise, should, on conviction, be punished as aiding and abetting rebellion."

An adherent to independence was now considered as one who courted exile, poverty, and ruin. Many yielded to the temptation, and became British subjects. The mischievous

\* Their names were: Joseph Bee, Richard Beresford, John Berwick, Daniel Bourdeaux, Benjamin Cudworth, Henry Crouch, John Splatt Cripps, Edward Darrell, Daniel De Saussure, George A. Hall, Thomas Grimball, Noble Wimberley Jones, William Lee, William Logan, Arthur Middleton, Christopher Peters, Benjamin Postell, Samuel Prideau, Philip Smith, Benjamin Walter, James Wakefield, Edward Weyman, Morton Wilkinson.

effects of slavery, in facilitating the conquest of the country, now became apparent. As the slaves had no interest at stake, the subjugation of the state was a matter of no consequence to them. Instead of aiding in its defence, they, by a variety of means, threw the weight of their little influence into the opposite scale.

Though numbers broke through all the ties, which bound them to support the cause of America, illustrious sacrifices were made at the shrine of liberty. Several of the richest men in the state suffered their fortunes to remain in the power and possession of their conquerors, rather than stain their honour, by joining the enemies of their country. The patriotism of the ladies contributed much to this firmness. They crowded on board prison ships, and other places of confinement, to solace their suffering countrymen. While the conquerors were regaling themselves, at concerts and assemblies, they could obtain very few of the fair sex to associate with them; but no sooner was an American officer introduced as a prisoner, than his company was sought for, and his person treated with every possible mark of attention and respect. On other occasions the ladies, in a great measure, retired from the public eye, wept over the distresses of their country, and gave every proof of the warmest attachment to its suffering cause. Among the numbers who were banished from their families, and whose property was seized by the conquerors, many examples could be produced, of ladies cheerfully parting with their sons, husbands, and brothers; exhorting them to fortitude and perseverance; and repeatedly entreating them never to suffer family attachments to interfere with the duty they owed to their country. When, in the progress of the war, they were also comprehended under a general sentence of banishment, with equal resolution they parted with their native country, and the many endearments of home, and followed their husbands into prison-ships and distant lands, where they were reduced to the necessity of receiving charity.

Animated by such examples, as well as by a high sense of honour, and the love of their country, a great proportion of the

gentlemen of South Carolina deliberately adhered to their first resolution of risking life and fortune in support of their liberties. Hitherto the royal forces in South Carolina had been attended with almost uninterrupted success. Their standards overspread the country, penetrated into every quarter, and triumphed over all opposition.

The British ministry, by this flattering posture of affairs, were once more intoxicated with the hope of subjugating America. New plans were formed, and great expectations indulged, of speedily re-uniting the dissevered members of the empire. It was now asserted, with a confidence bordering on presumption, that such troops as fought at Camden, put under such a commander as lord Cornwallis, would soon extirpate rebellion so effectually, as to leave no vestige of it in America. The British ministry and army, by an impious confidence in their wisdom and prowess, were duly prepared to give, in their approaching downfall, an useful lesson to the world.

The disaster of the army, under general Gates, overspread, at first, the face of American affairs, with a dismal gloom; but the day of prosperity to the United States, began, as will appear in the sequel, from that moment, to dawn. Their prospects brightened up; while those of their enemies were obscured by disgrace, broken by defeat, and at last covered with ruin. Elated with their victories, the conquerors grew more insolent and rapacious; while the real friends of independence became resolute and determined.

We have seen Sumter penetrating into South Carolina, and re-commencing a military opposition to British government. Soon after that event, he was promoted, by governor Rutledge, to the rank of brigadier general. About the same time, Marion was promoted to the same rank, who, in the northeastern extremity of the state, successfully prosecuted a similar plan. Unfurnished with the means of defence, he was obliged to take possession of the saws of the saw-mills, and to convert them into horsemen's swords. So much was he distressed for ammunition, that he has engaged, when he had not three rounds, to each man of his party. At other times,

he has brought his men into view, though without ammunition, that he might make a show of numbers to the enemy. For several weeks he had, under his command, only 70 men. At one time, hardships and dangers reduced that number to 25; yet, with this inconsiderable number, he secured himself in the midst of surrounding foes. Various schemes were tried, to detach the inhabitants from co-operating with him. Major Wemys burned scores of houses on Pedee, Lynch's creek, and Black river; belonging to such as were supposed to do duty with Marion, or to be subservient to his views. This had an effect different from what was intended. Revenge and despair co-operated with patriotism, to make these ruined men keep the field. Having no houses to shelter them, the camps of their countrymen became their homes. For several months, Marion and his party were obliged to sleep in the open air, and to shelter themselves in the recesses of deep swamps. From these retreats, they sallied out, whenever an opportunity of harassing the enemy, or of serving their country, presented itself.

Opposition to British government was not wholly confined to the parties commanded by Sumter and Marion. It was at no time altogether extinct, in the extremities of the state. The disposition to revolt, which had been excited on the approach of general Gates, was not extinguished by his defeat. The spirit of the people was overawed; but not subdued. The severity, with which revolters, who fell into the hands of the British, were treated, induced those who escaped, to persevere, and seek safety in swamps.

From the time of the general submission of the inhabitants, in 1780, pains had been taken to increase the royal force, by the co-operation of the yeomanry of the country. The British persuaded the people to form a royal militia, by representing, that every prospect of succeeding, in their scheme of independence, was annihilated; and that a further opposition would only be a prolongation of their distresses, if not their utter ruin. Major Ferguson, of the 71st regiment, was particularly active in this business. He visited the settlements of the disaffected to the American cause, and collected a



corps of militia of that description, from which much active service was expected. He advanced to the northwestern settlements, to hold communication with the loyalists of both Carolinas. From his presence, together with assurances of an early movement of the royal army into North Carolina, it was hoped that the friends of royal government would be roused to activity, in the service of their king. In the meantime, every preparation was made for urging offensive operations, as soon as the season, and the state of the stores, would permit.

That spirit of enterprise, which has already been mentioned, as beginning to revive among the American militia, about this time, prompted colonel Clarke to make an attempt on the British post at Augusta, in Georgia; but in this he failed, and was obliged to retreat. Major Ferguson, with the hope of intercepting his party, kept near the mountains, and at a considerable distance from support. These circumstances, together with the depredations of the loyalists, induced those hardy republicans, who reside on the west side of the Alleghany mountains, to form an enterprise for reducing that distinguished partisan. This was done of their own motion, without any direction from the governments of America, or from the officers of the continental army.

There was, without any apparent design, a powerful combination of several detached commanders, of the adjacent states, with their respective commands of militia. Colonel Campbell, of Virginia, colonels Cleveland, Shelby, Sevier, and McDowel, of North Carolina, together with colonels Lacey, Hawthorn and Hill, of South Carolina, all rendezvoused together, with a number of men amounting to 1600; though they were under no general command, and though they were not called upon, to embody by any common authority, or indeed by any authority at all, but that of a general impulse on their own minds. They had so little of the mechanism of a regular army, that the colonels, by common consent, commanded each day alternately. The hardships these volunteers underwent were very great. Some of them subsisted, for weeks together, without tasting bread, or salt,

or spirituous liquors, and slept in the woods without blankets. The running stream quenched their thirst. At night, the earth afforded them a bed, and the heavens, or, at most, the limbs of trees were their only covering. Ears of corn or pumpions thrown into the fire, with occasional supplies of beef or venison, killed and roasted in the woods, were the chief articles of their provisions. They had neither commissaries, quarter-masters, nor stores of any kind. They selected about a thousand of their best men, and mounted them on their fleetest horses. These attacked major Ferguson, 7th October, on the top of King's mountain, near the confines of North and South Carolina. The Americans formed three parties. Colonel Lacey of South Carolina led one, which attacked on the west. The two others were commanded by colonels Campbell and Cleveland; one of which attacked on the east, and the other in the centre.

On this occasion, colonel Cleveland addressed his party in the following plain unvarnished language: "My brave fellows! We have beat the tories, and we can beat them. They are all cowards. If they had the spirit of men, they would join with their fellow citizens, in supporting the independence of their country. When engaged, you are not to wait for the word of command from me. I will show you by my example, how to fight. I can undertake no more. Every man must consider himself as an officer, and act from his own judgment. Fire as quick as you can, and stand as long as you can. When you can do no better, get behind trees or retreat; but I beg of you not to run quite off. If we be repulsed, let us make a point to return, and renew the fight. Perhaps we may have better luck, in the second attempt, than in the first. If any of you be afraid, such have leave to retire; and they are requested, immediately, to take themselves off."

Ferguson with great boldness attacked the assailants with fixed bayonets, and compelled them successively to retire: but they only fell back a little way, and getting behind trees and rocks, renewed their fire, in almost every direction. The British, being uncovered, were aimed at, by the American marksmen; and many of them were slain. An unusual num-

ber of the killed were found shot in the head. Riflemen took off riflemen, with such exactness, that they killed each other, when taking sight, so effectually, that their eyes remained, after they were dead, one shut, and the other open, in the usual manner of marksmen, when levelling at their object. Major Ferguson displayed as much bravery, as was possible, in his situation: but his encampment, on the top of the mountain, was not well-chosen; as it gave the Americans an opportunity of covering themselves in their approaches. Had he pursued his march, on charging and driving the first part of the militia which gave way, he might have got off with the most of his men: but his unconquerable spirit disdained, either to flee or to surrender. After a severe conflict, he received a mortal wound. No chance of escape being left, and all prospect of successful resistance being at an end, the contest was ended, by the submission of the survivors. Upwards of 800 became prisoners, and 225 were killed and wounded. Very few of the assailants fell; but in their number was colonel Williams, a distinguished militia officer, in Ninety-Six district, who had been very active in opposing the re-establishment of British government. Ten of the royal militia, who had surrendered, were hanged by their conquerors. They were provoked to this measure, by the severity of the British, who had lately hanged several of the captured Americans, in South Carolina and Georgia. They also alleged, that the men who suffered were guilty of previous felonies, for which their lives were forfeited by the laws of the land. The fall of Ferguson was in itself a great loss to the royal cause. He possessed superior abilities, as a partisan, and his spirit of enterprise was uncommon. To a distinguished capacity for planning great designs, he also added the practical abilities, necessary to carry them into execution. The unexpected advantage, which the Americans gained over him and his party, in a great degree, frustrated a well-concerted scheme, for strengthening the British army, by the co-operation of the tory inhabitants, whom he had undertaken to discipline and prepare for active service. The total rout of the party, which had joined major Ferguson,

operated as a check on the future exertions of the loyalists. The same timid caution, which made them averse to joining their countrymen, in opposing the claims of Great Britain, restrained them from risking any more in support of the royal cause. Henceforward, they waited to see how the scales were likely to incline, and reserved themselves till the British army, by its own unassisted efforts, should gain a decided superiority.

In a few weeks after the general action near Camden, lord Cornwallis left a small force in that village, and marched with the main army, towards Salisbury; intending to push forwards in that direction. While on his way thither, the North Carolina militia was very industrious and successful, in annoying his detachments. Riflemen frequently penetrated near his camp, and, from behind trees, made sure of their objects. The late conquerors were exposed to unseen dangers, if they attempted to make an excursion of only a few hundred yards, from their main body. The defeat of major Ferguson, added to these circumstances, gave a serious alarm to lord Cornwallis; and he soon after retreated to Winnsborough. As he retired, the militia took several of his waggons; and single men often rode up within gun-shot of his army, discharged their pieces, and made their escape. The panic occasioned by the defeat of Gates, had, in a great measure, worn off. The defeat of Ferguson, and the consequent retreat of lord Cornwallis, encouraged the American militia to take the field; and the necessity of the times induced them to submit to stricter discipline. Sumter, soon after the dispersion of his corps on the 18th of August, collected a band of volunteers, partly from new adventurers, and partly from those who had escaped on that day. With these, though for three months there was no continental army in the state, he constantly kept the field, in support of American independence. He varied his position from time to time, about Enoree, Broad, and Tyger rivers, and had frequent skirmishes with his adversaries. Having mounted his followers, he infested the British parties with frequent incursions; beat up their quarters; intercepted their convoys; and so harassed them



with successive alarms, that their movements could not be made, but with caution and difficulty. His spirit of enterprise was so particularly injurious to the British, that they laid sundry plans for destroying his force; but they all failed in the execution. He was attacked at Broad river by major Wemys, commanding a corps of infantry and dragoons. In this action, the British were defeated, and their commanding officer taken prisoner. Eight days afterwards, he was attacked at Black-Stocks, near Tyger river, by lieutenant colonel Tarleton. The attack was begun with 170 dragoons, and eighty men of the 63d regiment. A considerable part of Sumter's force had been thrown into a large log barn, from the apertures of which, they fired in security. Many of the 63d regiment were killed. Tarleton charged with his cavalry, but, being unable to dislodge the Americans, he retreated, and Sumter was left in quiet possession of the field. The loss of the British in this action was considerable. Among their killed were three officers, major Money, lieutenants Gibson and Cope. The Americans lost very few: but general Sumter received a wound, which, for several months, interrupted his gallant enterprises, in behalf of his country. His zeal and activity in animating the militia, when they were discouraged by repeated defeats, and the bravery and good conduct he displayed, in sundry attacks on the British detachments, procured him the applause of his countrymen, and the thanks of congress.

For the three months, which followed the defeat of the American army near Camden, general Gates was industriously preparing to take the field. Having collected a force at Hillsborough, he advanced to Salisbury, and soon afterwards to Charlotte. He had done every thing in his power, to repair the injuries of his defeat, and was again in a condition to face the enemy; but from that influence, which popular opinion has over public affairs, in a commonwealth, congress resolved to supercede him, and to order a court of inquiry to be held on his conduct. This was founded on a former resolve, that whoever lost a post should be subject to a court of inquiry. The cases were no ways parallel; he had

lost a battle; but not a post. The only charge, that could be exhibited against general Gates, was, that he had been defeated. His enemies could accuse him of no military crime, unless that to be unsuccessful might be so reckoned. The public, sore with their losses, were desirous of a change: and congress found it necessary to gratify them; though at the expense of the feelings of one of their best, and, till August, 1780, one of their most successful officers. Virginia did not so soon forget Saratoga. When general Gates was at Richmond, on his way home from Carolina, the house of burgesses of that state unanimously resolved, “that a committee of four be appointed to wait on general Gates, and assure him of their high regard and esteem; that the remembrance of his former glorious services could not be obliterated, by any reverse of fortune; and that ever mindful of his great merit, they would omit no opportunity of testifying to the world, the gratitude which the country owed to him, in his military character.”

These events, together with a few unimportant skirmishes, not worthy of being particularly mentioned, closed the campaign of 1780 in the southern states. They afforded ample evidence of the folly of prosecuting the American war. Though British conquests had rapidly succeeded each other, yet no advantages accrued to the victors. The minds of the people were unsubdued, or rather more alienated from every idea of returning to their former allegiance. Such was their temper, that the expense of retaining them in subjection, would have exceeded all the profits of the conquest. British garrisons kept down open resistance, in the vicinity of the places where they were established; but as soon as they were withdrawn, and the people left to themselves, a spirit of revolt, hostile to Great Britain, always displayed itself; and the standard of independence, whensoever it was prudently raised, never wanted followers, among the active and spirited part of the community.

## CHAPTER XX.

*Campaign of 1780, in the Northern States.*

WHILE the war raged in South Carolina, the campaign of 1780, in the northern states, was barren of important events. At the close of the year 1779, the American northern army took post at Morristown, and built 1780 themselves huts, agreeably to the practice which had been first introduced at Valley Forge. This position was well calculated to cover the country, from the excursions of the British, being only twenty miles from New York.

Lord Stirling made an ineffectual attempt, in January, to surprise a party of the enemy on Staten Island. While he was on the island, a number of persons, from the Jersey side, passed over, and plundered the inhabitants, who had submitted to the British government. In these times of confusion, licentious persons fixed themselves near the lines, which divided the British from the Americans. Whensoever an opportunity offered, they were in the habit of going, within the settlements of the opposite party, and, under the pretence of distressing their enemies, committed the most shameful depredations. In the first months of the year 1780, while the royal army was weakened, by the expedition against Charleston, the British were apprehensive for their safety in New York. The rare circumstance which then existed, of a connexion between the main and York island, by means of ice, seemed to invite to the enterprise; but the force and equipments of the American army were unequal to it. Lieutenant general Kniphausen, who then commanded in New York, apprehending such a design, embodied the inhabitants of the city, as a militia, for its defence. They very cheerfully formed themselves into companies, and discovered great zeal in the service.

An incursion was made into Jersey, from New York, with 5000 men, commanded by lieutenant general Kniphausen.

They landed at Elizabeth-town, and proceeded to Connecticut farms. In this neighbourhood, lived the Reverend Mr. James Caldwell, a Presbyterian clergyman, of great activity, ability and influence; whose successful exertions, in animating the Jersey militia to defend their rights, had rendered him particularly obnoxious to the British. When the royal forces were on their way, into the country, a soldier came to his house, in his absence, and shot his wife, instantly dead, by levelling his piece directly at her, through the window of the room, in which she was sitting with her children. Her body, at the request of an officer of the new levies, was moved to some distance, and then the house, and every thing in it, was reduced to ashes. The British burnt about twelve other houses, and also the Presbyterian church; and then proceeded to Springfield. As they advanced, they were annoyed by colonel Dayton, with a few militia. On their approach to the bridge near the town, they were further opposed by general Maxwell, who, with a few continental troops, was prepared to dispute its passage. They made a halt, and soon after returned to Elizabeth-town. Before they had retreated, the whole American army at Morristown marched to oppose them. While this royal detachment was in Jersey, sir Henry Clinton returned, with his victorious troops, from Charleston to New York. He ordered a reinforcement to Kniphausen; and the whole advanced, a second time towards Springfield. They were now opposed by general Greene, with a considerable body of continental troops. Colonel Angel, with his regiment and a piece of artillery, was posted to secure the bridge in front of the town. An engagement took place. Superior numbers forced the Americans to retire. General Greene took post, with his troops, on a range of hills, in hopes of being attacked. Instead of this, the British began to burn the town. Near fifty dwelling-houses were reduced to ashes. The British then retreated; but were pursued by the enraged militia, till they entered Elizabeth-town. The next day, they set out on their return to New York. The loss of the Americans in the action was about eighty; and that of the British was supposed to be more. It is difficult to



tell what was the precise object of this expedition. Perhaps the royal commanders hoped to get possession of Morristown, and to destroy the American stores. Perhaps they flattered themselves, that the inhabitants were so dispirited, by the recent loss of Charleston, that they would submit without resistance; and that the soldiers of the continental army would desert to them: but, if these were their views, they were disappointed in both. The firm opposition, made by the Jersey farmers, contrasted with the conduct of the same people, in the year 1776, made it evident, that not only their aversion to Great Britain continued in full force; but that the practical habits of service and danger had improved the country militia, so as to bring them near to an equality with regular troops.

By such desultory operations, were hostilities carried on, at this time, in the northern states. Individuals were killed, houses were burnt, and much mischief done; but nothing was effected, which tended either to reconciliation or subjugation.

The loyal Americans, who had fled within the British lines, commonly called refugees, reduced a predatory war into system. On their petition to sir Henry Clinton, they had been, in the year 1779, permitted to set up a distinct government in New York, under a jurisdiction called, the honourable board of associated loyalists. They had something like a fleet of small privateers and cruisers, by the aid of which they committed various depredations. A party of them, who had formerly belonged to Massachusetts, went to Nantucket, broke open the warehouses, and carried off every thing that fell in their way. They also carried off two loaded brigs, and two or three schooners. In a proclamation left behind them, they observed, “that they had been deprived of their property, and compelled to abandon their dwellings, friends and connexions; and that they conceived themselves warranted by the laws of God and man, to wage war against their persecutors, and to endeavour, by every means in their power, to obtain compensation for their sufferings.” These associated loyalists eagerly embraced every adventure, which

gratified either their avarice or their revenge. Their enterprises were highly lucrative to themselves, and extremely distressing to the Americans. Their knowledge of the country, and superior means of transportation, enabled them to make hasty descents, and successful enterprises. A war of plunder, in which the feelings of humanity were often suspended, and which tended to no valuable public purpose, was carried on, in this shameful manner, from the double excitements of profit and revenge. The adjoining coasts of the continent, and especially the maritime parts of New Jersey, became scenes of waste and havoc.

The distress, which the Americans suffered, from the diminished value of their currency, though felt in the year 1778, and still more so, in the year 1779, did not arrive to its highest pitch, till the year 1780. Under the pressure of sufferings from this cause, the officers of the Jersey line addressed a memorial to their state legislature, setting forth, “that four months pay of a private would not procure, for his family, a single bushel of wheat; that the pay of a colonel would not purchase oats for his horse; that a common labourer or express rider received four times as much as an American officer.” They urged, “that, unless a speedy and ample remedy was provided, the total dissolution of their line was inevitable;” and concluded with saying, “that their pay should either be made up in Mexican dollars, or in something equivalent.” In addition to the insufficiency of their pay and support, other causes of discontent prevailed. The original idea of a continental army, to be raised, paid, subsisted, and regulated upon an equal and uniform principle, had been in a great measure exchanged for state establishments. This mischievous measure partly originated from necessity, for state credit was not quite so much depreciated as continental. Congress not possessing the means of supporting their army, devolved the business on the component parts of the confederacy. Some states, from their internal ability and local advantages, furnished their troops not only with cloathing, but with many conveniences. Others supplied them with some necessaries, but on a more contracted scale. A few,

from their particular situation, could do little or nothing at all. The officers and men, in the routine of duty, mixed daily, and compared circumstances. Those who fared worse than others were dissatisfied with a service, which made such injurious distinctions. From causes of this kind, super-added to a complication of wants and sufferings, a disposition to mutiny began to show itself in the American army. This broke forth into full action, among the soldiers, stationed at Fort Schuyler. Thirty-one of the men of that garrison went off in a body. Being pursued, sixteen of them were overtaken, and thirteen, of the sixteen, were instantly killed. About the same time, two regiments of Connecticut troops mutinied and got under arms. They determined to return home, or to gain subsistence at the point of the bayonet. Their officers reasoned with them, and urged every argument, that could interest their pride or their passions. They were reminded of their good conduct, and of the important objects for which they were contending: but their answer was, "our sufferings are too great, and we want present relief." After much expostulation, they went to their huts. While the army was in this feverish state of discontent, from their accumulated distresses, a printed paper, addressed to the soldiers of the continental army, was circulated in the American camp. This was in the following words: "The time is at length arrived, when all the artifices and falsehoods of the congress, and of your commanders, can no longer conceal from you the miseries of your situation. You are neither fed, clothed, nor paid. Your numbers are wasting away by sickness, famine, and nakedness, and rapidly so, by the period of your stipulated services being expired. This is now the period to fly from slavery and fraud."

"I am happy in acquainting the old countrymen, that the affairs of Ireland are fully settled; and that Great Britain and Ireland are united, as well from interest as from affection. I need not tell you, who are born in America, that you have been cheated and abused. You are both sensible, that, in order to procure your liberty, you must quit your leaders, and join your real friends, who scorn to impose upon you, and

who will receive you with open arms, kindly forgiving all your errors. You are told, you are surrounded by a numerous militia. This is also false. Associate then together; make use of your firelocks; and join the British army, where you will be permitted to dispose of yourselves as you please."

About the same time, or rather a little before, the news arrived of the reduction of Charleston, and the capture of the whole American southern army. Such was the firmness of the common soldiery, and so strong their attachment to the cause of their country, that, though danger impelled, want urged, and British favour invited them to a change of sides, yet, on the arrival of but a scanty supply of meat, for their immediate subsistence, military duty was cheerfully performed, and no uncommon desertion took place.

So great were the necessities of the American army, that Washington was obliged to call on the magistrates of the adjacent counties, for specified quantities of provisions, to be supplied in a given number of days. At other times, he was compelled to send out detachments of his troops, to take provisions at the point of the bayonet. This expedient at length failed; for the country in the vicinity of the army afforded no further supplies. These impressments were not only injurious to the morals and discipline of the army; but tended to alienate the affections of the people. Much of the support, which the American general had previously experienced from the inhabitants, proceeded from the difference of treatment they received from their own army, compared with what they suffered from the British. The general, whom the inhabitants hitherto regarded as their protector, had now no alternative, but to disband his troops, or to support them by force. The situation of Washington was eminently embarrassing. The army looked to him for provisions, the inhabitants for protection of their property. To supply the one, and not offend the other, seemed little less than an impossibility. To preserve order and subordination in an army of free republicans, even when well-fed, paid and clothed, would have been a work of difficulty; but to retain them in



service, and restrain them with discipline, when destitute, not only of the comforts, but often of the necessities of life, required address and abilities of such magnitude, as are rarely found in human nature. In this choice of difficulties, Washington not only kept his army together, but conducted with so much discretion, as to command the approbation both of the army and of the citizens.

So great a scarcity, in a country usually abounding with provisions, appears extraordinary; but various causes had concurred, about this time, to produce an unprecedented deficiency. The seasons both in 1779 and 1780 were unfavourable to the crops. The labours of the husbandmen, who were attached to the cause of independence, had been frequently interrupted by the calls for militia duty. Those who cared for neither side, or who, from principles of religion, held the unlawfulness of war, or who were secretly attached to the royal interest, had been very deficient in industry. Such sometimes reasoned, that all labour on their farms, beyond a bare supply of their own necessities, was unavailing; but the principal cause of the sufferings of the army was, the daily diminishing value of the continental bills of credit. The farmers found, that the longer they delayed the payment of taxes, the less quantity of country produce would discharge the stipulated sum. They also observed, that the longer they kept their grain on hand, the more of the paper currency was obtained in exchange for it. This either discouraged them from selling, or made them very tardy in coming to market. Many secreted their provisions, and denied having any; while others, who were contiguous to the British, secretly sold to them for gold or silver. The patriotism, which at the commencement of the war, had led so many to sacrifice property, for the good of their country, had, in a great degree, subsided. Though they still retained their good wishes for the cause, yet these did not carry them so far, as to induce a willingness to exchange the hard-earned produce of their farms, for a paper currency, of a daily diminishing value. For provisions carried to New York, the farmers received real money; but for

what was carried to the Americans, they only received paper. The value of the first was known, of the other daily varying, and in an unceasing progression, from bad to worse. Laws were made against this intercourse; but they were executed in the manner laws uniformly have been, in the evasion of which multitudes find an immediate interest.

In addition to these disasters from short crops, and depreciating money, disorder and confusion pervaded the departments for supplying the army. Systems for these purposes had been hastily adopted, and were very inadequate to the end proposed. To provide for an army under the best establishments, and with a full military chest, is a work of difficulty; and, though guarded by the precautions which time and experience have suggested, opens a door to many frauds: but it was the hard case of the Americans, to be called on to discharge this duty, without sufficient knowledge of the business, and under ill-digested systems, and with a paper currency that was not two days of the same value. Abuses crept in; frauds were practised; and economy was exiled.

To obviate these evils, congress adopted the expedient of sending a committee, of their own members, to the camp of their main army. Mr. Schuyler, of New York, Mr. Peabody, of New Hampshire, and Mr. Mathews, of South Carolina, were appointed. They were furnished with ample powers and instructions to reform abuses, to alter preceding systems, and to establish new ones in their room. This committee proceeded to camp, in May, 1780, and thence wrote sundry letters to congress and the states; in which, they confirmed the representations previously made, of the distresses and disorders every where prevalent. In particular, they stated, "that the army was unpaid for five months; that it seldom had more than six days provision in advance; and was, on several occasions, for sundry successive days, without meat; that the army was destitute of forage; that the medical department had neither sugar, coffee, tea, chocolate, wine, nor spirituous liquors of any kind; that every department of the army was without money, and had not even the shadow of

credit left; that the patience of the soldiers, worn down by the pressure of complicated sufferings, was on the point of being exhausted."

A tide of misfortunes, from all quarters, was, at this time, pouring in upon the United States. There appeared not, however, in their public bodies, the smallest disposition to purchase safety, by concessions of any sort. They seemed to rise in the midst of their distresses, and to gain strength from the pressure of calamities. When congress could neither command money nor credit, for the subsistence of their army, the citizens of Philadelphia formed an association, to procure a supply of necessary articles, for their suffering soldiers. The sum of 300,000 dollars was subscribed in a few days, and converted into a bank; the principal design of which was, to purchase provisions for the troops, in the most prompt and efficacious manner. The advantages of this institution were great, and particularly enhanced by the critical time in which it was instituted. The loss of Charleston, and the subsequent British victories in Carolina, produced effects directly the reverse of what were expected. It being the deliberate resolution of the Americans, never to return to the government of Great Britain, such unfavourable events, as threatened the subversion of independence, operated as incentives to their exertions. The patriotic flame, which had blazed forth in the beginning of the war, was re-kindled. A willingness to do, and to suffer, in the cause of American liberty, was revived in the breasts of many. These dispositions were invigorated by private assurances, that his Most Christian Majesty would, in the course of the campaign, send a powerful armament to their aid. To excite the states to be in readiness for this event, congress circulated among them an address, of which the following is a part: "The crisis calls for exertion. Much is to be done in a little time; and every motive, that can stimulate the mind of man, presents itself to view. No period has occurred in this long and glorious struggle, in which indecision would be so destructive on the one hand, and on the other, no conjuncture has been more favourable to great and deciding efforts."

The powers of the committee of congress, in the American camp, were enlarged so far, as to authorise them to frame and execute such plans as, in their opinion, would most effectually draw forth the resources of the country, in co-operating with the armament expected from France. In this character, they wrote sundry letters to the states, stimulating them to vigorous exertions. It was agreed to make arrangements for bringing into the field 35,000 effective men, and to call on the states for specific supplies of every thing necessary for their support. To obtain the men, it was proposed to complete the regular regiments, by drafts from the militia, and to make up what they fell short of 35,000 effectives, by calling forth more of the militia. Every motive concurred to rouse the activity of the inhabitants. The states, nearly exhausted by the war, ardently wished for its termination. An opportunity now offered for striking a decisive blow, that might at once, as they supposed, rid the country of its distresses. The only thing required on the part of the United States was, to bring into the field 35,000 men, and to make effectual arrangements for their support. The tardiness of deliberation in congress was, in a great measure, done away, by the full powers given to their committee in camp. Accurate estimates were made of every article of supply, necessary for the ensuing campaign. These, and also the numbers of men wanted, were assigned to the ten northern states, in proportion to their abilities and numbers. In conformity to these requisitions, vigorous resolutions were adopted for carrying them into effect. Where voluntary enlistments fell short of the proposed number, the deficiencies were, by the laws of several states, to be made up by drafts or lots from the militia. The towns in New England, and the counties in the middle states, were respectively called on, for a specified number of men. Such was the zeal of the people in New England, that neighbours would often club together, to engage one of their number to go into the army. Being without money, in conformity to the practice usual in the early stages of society, they paid for military duty with cattle. Twenty head were frequently given as a reward for eighteen months service.



Maryland directed her lieutenants of counties to class all the property, in their respective counties, into as many equal classes, as there were men wanted; and each class was by law obliged, within ten days thereafter, to furnish an able-bodied recruit, to serve during the war; and, in case of their neglecting or refusing so to do, the county lieutenants were authorised to procure men, at their expense, at any rate, not exceeding fifteen pounds in every hundred pounds worth of property, classed agreeably to the law. Virginia also classed her citizens, and called upon the respective classes for every fifteenth man for public service. Pennsylvania concentrated the requisite power in her president, Joseph Reed, and authorised him to draw forth the resources of the state, under certain limitations; and, if necessary, to declare martial law over the state. The legislative part of these complicated arrangements was speedily passed; but the execution, though uncommonly vigorous, lagged far behind. Few occasions could occur, in which it might so fairly be tried, to what extent, in conducting a war, a variety of wills might be brought to act in unison. The result of the experiment was, that, however favourable republics may be to the liberty and happiness of the people, in the time of peace, they will be greatly deficient in that vigour and despatch, which military operations require, unless they imitate the policy of monarchies, by committing the executive departments of government to the direction of a single will.

While these preparations were making in America, the armament, which had been promised by his Most Christian Majesty, was on its way. As soon as it was known in France, that a resolution was adopted, to send out troops to the United States, the young French nobility discovered the greatest zeal to be employed on that service. Court favour was scarcely ever solicited with more earnestness, than was the honour of serving under Washington. The number of applicants was much greater than the service required. The disposition, to support the American revolution, was not only prevalent in the court of France, but it animated the whole body of the nation. The wind and waves did not second the

ardent wishes of the French troops. Though they sailed from France, on the 1st of May, 1780, they did not reach a port in the United States, till the 10th of July following. On that day, to the great joy of the Americans, M. de Ternay arrived at Rhode Island, with a squadron of seven sail of the line, five frigates, and five smaller armed vessels. He likewise conveyed a fleet of transports, with four old French regiments, besides the legion de Lauzun, and a battalion of artillery, amounting in the whole to 6000 men, under the command of lieutenant-general count de Rochambeau. To the French, immediate possession was given of the forts and batteries on the island; and by their exertions, they were soon put in a high state of defence. An address of congratulation, from the general assembly of the state of Rhode Island, was presented to count de Rochambeau, in which they expressed "their most grateful sense of the magnanimous aid afforded to the United States, by their illustrious friend and ally, the monarch of France; and also gave assurances of every exertion in their power, for the supply of the French forces, with all manner of refreshments, and necessaries for rendering the service happy and agreeable." Rochambeau declared in his answer, "that he only brought over the vanguard of a much greater force, which was destined for their aid; and that he was ordered by the king, his master, to assure them, that his whole power should be exerted for their support." "The French troops," he said, "were under the strictest discipline, and, acting under the orders of general Washington, would live with the Americans as brethren." He returned their compliments by an assurance, "that, as brethren, not only his own life, but the lives of all those under his command were devoted to their service."

Washington recommended, in public orders to the American officers, as a symbol of friendship and affection for their allies, to wear black and white cockades, the ground to be of the first colour, and the relief of the second.

The French troops, united both in interest and affection with the Americans, ardently longed for an opportunity to co-operate with them, against the common enemy. The

continental army wished for the same with equal ardour. One circumstance alone seemed unfavourable to this spirit of enterprise. This was the deficient cloathing of the Americans. Some whole lines, officers as well as men, were shabby; and a great proportion of the privates were without shirts. Such troops, brought along side even of allies, fully clad in the elegance of uniformity, must have been more or less than men, to feel no degradation on the contrast.

Admiral Arbuthnot had only four sail of the line, at New York, when M. de Ternay arrived at Rhode Island. This inferiority was in three days reversed, by the arrival of admiral Greaves with six sail of the line. The British admiral, having now a superiority, proceeded to Rhode Island. He soon discovered, that the French were perfectly secure from attack by sea. Sir Henry Clinton, who had returned in the preceding month, with his victorious troops from Charleston, embarked about 8000 of his best men, and proceeded as far as Huntingdon-bay, on Long Island, with the apparent design of concurring with the British fleet, in attacking the French force at Rhode Island. When this movement took place, Washington set his army in motion, and proceeded to Peekskill. Had sir Henry Clinton prosecuted what appeared to be his design, it was intended to attack New York in his absence. Preparations were made for that purpose; but sir Henry Clinton instantly turned about, from Huntingdon-bay, towards New York.

In the meantime, the French fleet and army being blocked up at Rhode Island, were incapacitated from co-operating with the Americans. Hopes were nevertheless indulged, that by the arrival of another fleet of his Most Christian Majesty, then in the West Indies, under the command of count de Guchien, the superiority would be so much in favour of the allies, as to enable them to prosecute their original intention of attacking New York. When the expectations of the Americans were raised to the highest pitch, and when they were in great forwardness of preparation, to act in concert with their allies, intelligence arrived that count de Guchien had

sailed for France. This disappointment was extremely mortifying. The Americans had made uncommon exertions, on the idea of receiving such an aid from their allies, as would enable them to lay effectual siege to New York, or to strike some decisive blow. Their towering expectations were in a moment levelled with the dust. Another campaign was anticipated, and new shades were added to the deep cloud, which, for some time past, had overshadowed American affairs.

The campaign of 1780 passed away in the northern states, as has been related, in successive disappointments, and reiterated distresses. The country was exhausted; the continental currency expiring. The army, for want of subsistence, was kept inactive, and brooding over its calamities. While these disasters were openly menacing the ruin of the American cause, treachery was silently undermining it. A distinguished officer engaged, for a stipulated sum of money, to betray, into the hands of the British, an important post committed to his care. General Arnold, who committed this foul crime, was a native of Connecticut. That state, remarkable for the purity of its morals, for its republican principles and patriotism, was the birth place of a man, to whom none of the other states have produced an equal. He had been among the first to take up arms against Great Britain, and to widen the breach between the parent state and the colonies. His distinguished military talents had procured him every honour a grateful country could bestow. Poets and painters had marked him as a suitable subject for the display of their talents. He possessed an elevated seat in the hearts of his countrymen, and was in the full enjoyment of a substantial fame, for the purchase of which, the wealth of worlds ought to have been insufficient. His country had not only loaded him with honours; but forgiven him his crimes. Though, in his accounts against the states, there was much room to suspect fraud and imposition, yet the recollection of his gallantry and good conduct, in a great measure, served as a cloak to cover the whole. He, who had been prodigal of life, in his country's cause, was indulged in extraordinary demands for



his services. The generosity of the states did not keep pace with the extravagance of their favourite officer. A sumptuous table and expensive equipage, unsupported by the resources of private fortune, unguarded by the virtues of economy and good management, soon increased his debts beyond a possibility of his discharging them. His love of pleasure produced the love of money; and that extinguished all sensibility to the obligations of honour and duty. The calls of luxury were pressing, and demanded gratification, though at the expense of fame and country. Contracts were made, speculations entered into, and partnerships instituted, which could not bear investigation. Oppression, extortion, misapplication of public money and property, furnished him with the further means of gratifying his favourite passions. In these circumstances, a change of sides afforded the only hope of evading a scrutiny, and, at the same time, held out a prospect of replenishing his exhausted coffers. The disposition of the American forces, in the year 1780, afforded an opportunity of accomplishing this, so much to the advantage of the British, that they could well afford a liberal reward for the beneficial treachery. The American army was stationed in the strong holds of the Highlands, on both sides of the North River. In this arrangement, Arnold solicited for the command of West-Point. This has been call the Gibraltar of America. It was built, after the loss of Fort Montgomery, for the defence of the North River, and was deemed the most proper for commanding its navigation. Rocky ridges, rising one behind another, rendered it incapable of being invested, by less than twenty thousand men. Though some, even then, entertained doubts of Arnold's fidelity, yet Washington, in the unsuspecting spirit of a soldier, believing it to be impossible that honour should be wanting in a breast, which he knew was the seat of valour, cheerfully granted his request, and intrusted him with the important post. Arnold, thus invested with command, carried on a negociation with sir Henry Clinton, by which it was agreed, that the former should make a disposition of his forces, which would enable the latter to surprise West-Point, under such circumstances,

that he would have the garrison so completely in his power, that the troops must either lay down their arms, or be cut to pieces. The object of this negociation was the strongest post of the Americans; the thoroughfare of communication, between the eastern and southern states; and was the repository of their most valuable stores. The loss of it would have been severely felt.

The agent employed in this negociation, on the part of sir Henry Clinton, was major André, adjutant general of the British army, a young officer of great hopes, and of uncommon merit. Nature had bestowed on him an elegant taste for literature and the fine arts, which, by industrious cultivation, had been greatly improved. He possessed many amiable qualities, and very great accomplishments. His fidelity, together with his place and character, eminently fitted him for this business; but his high ideas of candour, and his abhorrence of duplicity, made him inexpert in practising those arts of deception which it required. To favour the necessary communications, the Vulture sloop of war had been previously stationed in the North River, as near to Arnold's posts as was practicable, without exciting suspicion. Before this, a written correspondence, between Arnold and André, had been for some time carried on, under the fictitious names of Gustavus and Anderson. A boat was sent at night from the shore, to fetch major André. On its return, Arnold met him at the beach, without the posts of either army. Their business was not finished, till it was too near the dawn of day, for André to return to the Vulture. Arnold told him, he must be concealed till the next night. For that purpose, he was conducted within one of the American posts, and continued with Arnold the following day. The boatmen refused to carry him back the next night, as the Vulture, from being exposed to the fire of some cannon, brought up to annoy her, had changed her position. André's return to New York, by land, was then the only practicable mode of escape. To favour this, he exchanged his uniform, which he had hitherto worn under a surtout, for a common coat; was furnished with a horse, and, under the name of John Anderson, with a pass-

port, "to go to the lines of White Plains, or lower, if he thought proper; he being on public business." He advanced alone and undisturbed, a great part of the way. When he thought himself almost out of danger, he was stopped by three of the New York militia, who were, with others, scouting between the out-posts of the two armies. Major André, instead of producing his pass, asked the man who stopped him, "where he belonged to." He was answered, "to below," meaning New York. He then replied, "so do I," declared himself a British officer, and pressed that he might not be detained. He soon discovered his mistake. His captors proceeded to search him. Sundry papers were found in his possession. These were secreted in his boots, and were in Arnold's hand-writing. They contained exact returns of the state of the forces, ordnances, and defences, at West-Point, with the artillery orders, critical remarks on the works, &c.

André offered his captors a purse of gold and a new valuable watch, if they would let him pass; and permanent provision, and future promotion, if they would convey and accompany him to New York. They nobly disdained the proffered bribe, and delivered him, a prisoner, to lieutenant colonel Jameson, who commanded the scouting parties. In testimony of the high sense, entertained of the virtuous and patriotic conduct of John Paulding, David Williams, and Isaac Van Vert, the captors of André, congress resolved, "that each of them receive, annually, two hundred dollars in specie, during life; that the board of war be directed to procure for each of them a silver medal, on one side of which should be a shield with this inscription, *Fidelity*, and on the other, the following motto, *Vincit Amor Patriæ*; and that the commander in chief be requested to present the same, with the thanks of congress, for their fidelity, and the eminent service they had rendered their country." André, when delivered to Jameson, continued to call himself by the name of Anderson, and asked leave to send a letter to Arnold, to acquaint him with Anderson's detention. This was inconsiderately granted. Arnold, on the receipt of this letter, abandoned every thing; and went on board the Vulture sloop

of war. Lieutenant colonel Jameson forwarded to Washington all the papers found on André, together with a letter giving an account of the whole affair; but the express, by taking a different route from the general, who was returning from a conference, at Hartford, with count de Rochambeau, missed him. This caused such a delay as gave Arnold time to effect his escape. The same packet, which detailed the particulars of André's capture, brought a letter from him, in which he avowed his name and character, and endeavoured to show that he did not come under the description of a spy. The letter was expressed in terms of dignity without insolence, and of apology without meanness. He stated therein, that he held a correspondence with a person, under the orders of his general; that his intention went no further than meeting that person, on neutral ground, for the purpose of intelligence; and that, against his stipulation, his intention, and without his knowledge beforehand, he was brought within the American posts, and had to concert his escape from them. Being taken on his return, he was betrayed into the vile condition, of an enemy in disguise. His principal request was, that, "whatever his fate might be, a decency of treatment might be observed, which would mark, that, though unfortunate, he was branded with nothing that was dishonourable, and that he was involuntarily an impostor."

Washington referred the whole case to the examination and decision of a board, consisting of fourteen general officers. On his examination, André voluntarily confessed every thing, that related to himself, and, particularly, that he did not come ashore under the protection of a flag. The board did not examine a single witness; but founded their report on his own confession. In this they stated the following facts: "that major André came on shore, on the night of the 21st of September, in a private and secret manner; that he changed his dress within the American lines, and, under a feigned name, and disguised habit, passed their works; that he was taken in a disguised habit, when on his way to New York; and that, when taken, several papers were found in his possession, which contained intelligence for the enemy."



From these facts, they further reported it as their opinion, "that major André ought to be considered as a spy; and that agreeably to the laws and usages of nations, he ought to suffer death."

Sir Henry Clinton, lieutenant general Robertson, and the late American general Arnold, wrote pressing letters to Washington, to prevent the decision of the board of general officers from being carried into effect. Arnold in particular urged, that every thing done by major André was done by his particular request, and at a time when he was the acknowledged commanding officer in the department. He contended, "that he had a right to transact all these matters, for which, though wrong, major André ought not to suffer." An interview, also, took place between general Robertson, on the part of the British, and general Greene, on the part of the Americans. Every thing was urged by the former, that ingenuity or humanity could suggest, for averting the proposed execution. Greene made a proposition for delivering up André for Arnold; but this could not be acceded to by the British, without offending against every principle of policy. Robertson urged, "that André went on shore, under the sanction of a flag, and that, being then in Arnold's power, he was not accountable for his subsequent actions, which were said to be compulsory." To this it was replied, that "he was employed in the execution of measures, very foreign from the objects of flags of truce, and such as they were never meant to authorise or countenance; and that major André, in the course of his examination, had candidly confessed, that it was impossible for him to suppose that he came on shore under the sanction of a flag." As Greene and Robertson differed so widely, both in their statement of facts, and the inferences they drew from them, the latter proposed to the former, that the opinions of disinterested gentlemen might be taken on the subject, and nominated Kniphausen and Rochambeau. Robertson also urged, that André possessed a great share of sir Henry Clinton's esteem; and that he would be infinitely obliged, if he should be spared. He offered, that, in case André were permitted to return with him, to

New York, any person whatever, that might be named, should be set at liberty. All these arguments and entreaties having failed, Robertson presented a long letter from Arnold, in which he endeavoured to exculpate André, by acknowledging himself the author of every part of his conduct, "and particularly insisted on his coming from the Vulture, under a flag, which he had sent for that purpose." He declared, that, if André suffered, he should think himself bound in honour to retaliate. He also observed, "that forty of the principal inhabitants of South Carolina had justly forfeited their lives, who had hitherto been spared, only through the clemency of sir Henry Clinton, but who could no longer extend his mercy, if major André suffered: an event which would probably open a scene of bloodshed, at which humanity must revolt." He entreated Washington, by his own honour, and for the sake of humanity, not to suffer an unjust sentence to touch the life of André; but if that warning should be disregarded, and André suffer, he called heaven and earth to witness, that he alone would be justly answerable, for the torrents of blood, that might be spilt in consequence."

Every exertion was made by the royal commanders to save André; but without effect. It was the general opinion of the American army, that his life was forfeited; and that national dignity, and sound policy required, that the forfeiture should be exacted.

André, though superior to the terrors of death, wished to die like a soldier. To obtain this favour, he wrote a letter to Washington, fraught with sentiments of military dignity. From an adherence to the usages of war, it was not thought proper to grant this request; but his delicacy was saved from the pain of receiving a negative answer. The guard, which attended him in his confinement, marched with him to the place of execution. The way, over which he passed, was crowded, on each side, by anxious spectators. Their sensibility was strongly impressed, by beholding a well-dressed youth, in the bloom of life, of a peculiarly engaging person, mien and aspect, devoted to immediate execution. Major André walked with firmness, composure and dignity, between

two officers of his guard, his arm being locked in theirs. Upon seeing the preparations, at the fatal spot, he asked, with some degree of concern, "must I die in this manner?" He was told, it was unavoidable. He replied, "I am reconciled to my fate, but not to the mode;" but soon subjoined, "It will be but a momentary pang." He ascended the cart, with a pleasing countenance, and with a degree of composure, which excited the admiration, and melted the hearts of all the spectators. He was asked, when the fatal moment was at hand, if he had any thing to say? He answered, "nothing but to request, that you will witness to the world, that I die like a brave man." The succeeding moments closed the affecting scene.

This execution was the subject of severe censures. Barbarity, cruelty, and murder were plentifully charged on the Americans; but the impartial of all nations allowed, that it was warranted by the usages of war. It cannot be condemned, without condemning the maxims of self-preservation, which have uniformly guided the practice of hostile nations. The finer feelings of humanity would have been gratified, by dispensing with the rigid maxims of war, in favour of so distinguished an officer; but these feelings must be controlled by a regard for the public safety. Such was the distressed state of the American army, and so abundant were their causes of complaint, that there was much to fear from the contagious nature of treachery. Could it have been reduced to a certainty, that there were no more Arnolds in America, perhaps André's life might have been spared; but the necessity of discouraging further plots fixed his fate, and stamped it with the seal of political necessity. If conjectures in the boundless field of possible contingencies were to be indulged, it might be said, that it was more consonant to extended humanity, to take one life, than, by ill-timed lenity, to lay a foundation, which probably would occasion not only the loss of many, but endanger the independence of a great country.

Though a regard to the public safety imposed a necessity for inflicting the rigours of martial law, yet the rare worth of this unfortunate officer made his unhappy case the subject of

universal regret. Not only among the partisans of royal government, but among the firmest American republicans, the friendly tear of sympathy freely flowed, for the early fall of this amiable young man. Some condemned; others justified: but all regretted the fatal sentence, which put a period to his valuable life.

This grand project terminated with no other alteration, in respect of the British, than that of their exchanging one of their best officers, for the worst man in the American army. Arnold was immediately appointed a brigadier general, in the service of the king of Great Britain. The failure of the scheme, respecting West-Point, made it necessary for him to dispel the cloud, which overshadowed his character, by the performance of some signal service for his new masters. The condition of the American army afforded him a prospect of doing something of consequence. He flattered himself, that by the allurements of pay and promotion, he should be able to raise a numerous force, from among the distressed American soldiery. He therefore took methods for accomplishing this purpose, by obviating their scruples, and working on their passions. His first public measure was, an address, directed to the inhabitants of America, dated from New York, five days after André's execution. In this, he endeavoured to justify himself for deserting their cause. He said, "that, when he first engaged in it, he conceived the rights of his country to be in danger, and that duty and honour called him to her defence. A redress of grievances was his only aim and object. He, however acquiesced in the declaration of independence, although he thought it precipitate. But the reasons that then were offered to justify that measure, no longer could exist; when Great Britain, with the open arms of a parent, offered to embrace them as children, and to grant the wished for redress. From the refusal of these proposals, and the ratification of the French alliance, all his ideas of the justice and policy of the war were totally changed, and from that time, he had become a professed loyalist." He acknowledged that, "in these principles, he had only retained his arms and command, for an



opportunity to surrender them to Great Britain." This address was soon followed by another, inscribed to the officers and soldiers of the continental army. It was intended to induce them to follow his example, and engage in the royal service. He informed them, that he was authorised to raise a corps of cavalry and infantry, who were to be on the same footing with the other troops, in the British service. To allure the private men, three guineas were offered to each, besides payment for their horses, arms and accoutrements. Rank in the British army was also held out to the American officers, who would recruit and bring in a certain number of men, proportioned to the different grades in military service. These offers were proposed to unpaid soldiers, who were suffering from the want of both food and cloathing, and to officers who were, in a great degree, obliged to support themselves, from their own resources, while they were spending the prime of their days, and risking their lives, in the unproductive service of congress. Though they were urged, at a time, when the paper currency was at its lowest ebb of depreciation, and the wants and distresses of the American army were at their highest pitch, yet they did not produce the intended effect on a single sentinel or officer. Whether the circumstances of Arnold's case added new shades to the crime of desertion, or whether the providential escape, from the deep laid scheme against West-Point, gave a higher tone to the firmness of the American soldiery, cannot be unfolded: but, from these or some other causes, desertion wholly ceased, at this remarkable period of the war.

It is matter of reproach to the United States, that they brought into public view a man of Arnold's character; but it is to the honour of human nature, that a great revolution, and an eight years war, produced but one such example. In civil contests, for officers to change sides has not been unusual; but in the various events of the American war, and among the many regular officers it called to the field, nothing occurred, that bore any resemblance to the character of Arnold. His singular case enforces the policy of conferring high trusts, exclusively, on men of clean hands, and of withholding all

public confidence from those, who are subjected to the dominion of pleasure.

A gallant enterprise of major Talmadge, in the course of this campaign, shall close this chapter. He crossed the sound to Long Island, with eighty men, made a circuitous march of twenty miles to Fort George, and reduced it, without any other loss, than that of one private man wounded. He killed and wounded eight of the enemy, captured a lieutenant colonel, a captain, and fifty-five privates.

## CHAPTER XXI.

*Foreign Affairs, connected with the American Revolution, 1780, 1781.*

THAT spark, which was first kindled at Boston, gradually expanded itself, till sundry of the nations of Europe were involved in its wide-spreading flame. France, Spain, and Holland were, in the years 1778, 1779, and 1780, successively drawn in for a share of the general calamity.

These events had so direct an influence on the American war, that a short recapitulation of them becomes necessary.

Soon after his Most Catholic Majesty had declared war against Great Britain, expeditions were carried on by Don Galvez, the Spanish governor of Louisiana, against the British settlements, in West Florida. These were easily reduced. The conquest of the whole province was completed in a few months, by the reduction of Pensacola. The Spaniards were not so successful in their attempts against Gibraltar and Jamaica. They had blockaded the former of these places, on the land side, ever since July, 1779; and soon afterwards invested it as closely by sea, as the nature of the gut, and variety of wind and weather, would permit. Towards the close of the year, the garrison was reduced to great straits. Vegetables were with difficulty to be got at any price; but bread, the great essential both of life and health, was most deficient. Governor Elliot, who commanded in the garrison, made an experiment, to ascertain what quantity of rice would suffice a single person; and lived for eight successive days, on thirty-two ounces of that nutritious grain.

The critical situation of Gibraltar called for relief. A strong squadron was prepared for that purpose, and the command of it given to sir George Rodney. He, when on his way thither, fell in with fifteen sail of merchant-men, under a slight convoy, bound from St. Sebastian to Cadiz, and captured the whole. Several of the vessels were laden with

provisions, which, being sent into Gibraltar, proved a seasonable supply. In eight days afterwards, he engaged, near Cape St. Vincent, with a Spanish squadron, of eleven sail of the line, commanded by Don Juan de Langara. Early in the action, the Spanish ship *San Domingo*, mounting 70 guns, and carrying 600 men, blew up; and all on board perished. The action continued with great vigour, on both sides, for ten hours. The Spanish admiral's ship, the *Phoenix*, of 80 guns, and three of 70, were carried into a British port. The *San Julian*, of 70 guns, was taken. A lieutenant, with 70 British seamen, was put on board; but, as she ran on shore, the victors became prisoners. Another ship of the same force was also taken; but afterwards totally lost. Four escaped; two of them being greatly damaged. The Spanish admiral did not strike, till his ship was reduced to a mere wreck. Captain Macbride, of the *Bienfaisant*, to whom he struck, disdaining to convey infection, even to an enemy, informed him, that a malignant small-pox prevailed on board the *Bienfaisant*; and offered to permit the Spanish prisoners to stay on board the *Phoenix*, rather than, by a removal, to expose them to the small-pox, trusting to the admiral's honour, that no advantage would be taken of the circumstance. The proposal was cheerfully embraced, and the conditions honourably observed. The consequence of this important victory was, the immediate and complete relief of Gibraltar. This being done, Rodney proceeded to the West Indies. The Spaniards, nevertheless, persevered with steadiness, in their original design of reducing Gibraltar. They seemed to be entirely absorbed in that object. The garrison, after some time, began again to suffer the inconveniences which flow from deficient and unwholesome food: but in April, 1781, complete relief was obtained through the intervention of a British fleet, commanded by admiral Darby.

The court of Spain, mortified at these repeated disappointments, determined to make greater exertions. Their works were carried on with more vigour than ever. Having, on an experiment of twenty months, found the inefficacy of a blockade, they resolved to try the effects of a bombardment.



Their batteries were mounted with guns of the heaviest metal, and with mortars of the largest dimensions. These disgorged torrents of fire on a narrow spot. It seemed as if not only the works, but the rock itself must have been overwhelmed. All distinction of parts was lost in flame and smoke. This dreadful cannonade continued day and night, almost incessantly, for three weeks; in every twenty-four hours of which, 100,000 lbs. of gun-powder were consumed, and between four and 5000 shot and shells went through the town. It then slackened; but was not intermitted, one whole day, for upwards of a twelvemonth. The fatigues of the garrison were extreme; but the loss of men was less than might have been expected. For the first ten weeks of this unexampled bombardment, the whole number of killed and wounded was about 300. The damage done to the works was trifling. The houses in town, about 500 in number, were mostly destroyed. Such of the inhabitants, as were not buried in the ruins of their houses, or torn to pieces by the shells, fled to the remote parts of the rocks; but destruction followed them to places which had always been deemed secure. No scene could be more deplorable. Mothers and children, clasped in each others' arms, were so completely torn to pieces, that it seemed more like an annihilation, than a dispersion of their shattered fragments. Ladies, of the greatest sensibility, and most delicate constitutions, deemed themselves happy to be admitted to a few hours of repose, in the casemates, amidst the noise of a crowded soldiery, and the groans of the wounded.

At the first onset, general Elliot retorted on the besiegers a shower of fire, but, foreseeing the difficulty of procuring supplies, he soon retrenched, and received with comparative unconcern, the fury and violence of his adversaries. By the latter end of November, the besiegers had brought their works to that state of perfection which they intended. The care and ingenuity employed upon them were extraordinary. The best engineers of France and Spain had united their abilities, and both kingdoms were filled with sanguine expectations of speedy success. In this conjuncture, when all Europe was in suspense, concerning the fate of the garrison, and when,

from the prodigious efforts made for its reduction, many believed that it could not hold out much longer, a sally was projected and executed, that in about two hours, destroyed those works, on which so much time, skill, and labour had been expended.

A body of 2000 chosen men, under the command of brigadier general Ross, marched out about two o'clock in the morning, November 27th, and, at the same instant, made a general attack, on the whole exterior front of the lines of the besiegers. The Spaniards gave way on every side, and abandoned their works. The pioneers and artillery men spread their fire with such rapidity, that, in a little time, every thing combustible was in flames. The mortars and cannon were spiked, and their beds, platforms, and carriages destroyed. The magazines blew up, one after another. The loss of the detachment, which accomplished all this destruction, was inconsiderable.

This unexpected event disconcerted the besiegers; but they soon recovered from their alarm, and, with a perseverance almost peculiar to their nation, determined to go on with the siege. Their subsequent exertions, and reiterated defeats, shall be related in the order of time in which they took place.

While the Spaniards were urging the siege of Gibraltar, a scheme, previously concerted with the French, was in a train of execution. This consisted of two parts. The object of the first, concerted between the French and Spaniards, was no less than the conquest of Jamaica. The object of the second, in which the French and the Americans were parties, was the reduction of New York. In conformity to this plan, the monarchs of France and Spain, early in the year 1780, assembled a force in the West Indies, superior to that of the British. Their combined fleets amounted to thirty-six sail of the line, and their land forces were in a correspondent proportion. By acting in concert, they hoped to make rapid conquests in the West Indies.

Fortunately for the British interest, this great hostile force carried within itself the cause of its own overthrow. The

Spanish troops, from being too much crowded on board their transports, were seized with a mortal and contagious distemper. This spread through the French fleet, and land forces, as well as their own. With the hopes of arresting its progress, the Spaniards were landed in the French islands. By these disastrous events, the spirit of enterprise was damped. The combined fleets, having neither effected, nor attempted any thing of consequence, desisted from the prosecution of the objects of the campaign. The failure of the first part of the plan occasioned the failure of the second. Count de Guichen, the commander of the French fleet, who was to have followed M. de Ternay, and to have co-operated with Washington, instead of coming to the American continent, sailed with a large convoy, collected from the French islands, directly to France.

The abortive plans of the French and Spaniards, operated directly against the interest of the United States; but this was, in a short time, counterbalanced, by the increased embarrassments occasioned to Great Britain, by the armed neutrality of the northern powers, and by a rupture with Holland.

The naval superiority of Great Britain had long been the subject of regret and of envy. As it was the interest, so it seemed to be the wish of European sovereigns, to avail themselves of the present favourable moment, to effect an humiliation of her maritime grandeur. That the flag of all nations must strike to British ships of war, could not be otherwise than mortifying to independent sovereigns. This haughty demand was not their only cause of complaint. The activity and number of British privateers had rendered them objects of terror, not only to the commercial shipping of their enemies, but to the many vessels belonging to other powers, that were employed in trading with them. Various litigations had taken place, between the commanders of British armed vessels, and those who were in the service of neutral powers, respecting the extent of that commerce, which was consistent with a strict and fair neutrality. The British insisted on the lawfulness of seizing supplies, which were about to be carried

to their enemies. In the habit of commanding on the sea, they considered power and right to be synonymous terms. As other nations, from a dread of provoking their vengeance, had submitted to their claim of dominion on the ocean, they fancied themselves invested with authority, to control the commerce of independent nations, when it interfered with their views. The empress of Russia took the lead, in establishing a system of maritime laws, which tended to subvert the claims of Great Britain. Her trading vessels had long been harassed by British searches and seizures, on pretence of their carrying on a commerce, inconsistent with neutrality. The present crisis favoured the re-establishment of the laws of nature, in place of the usurpations of Great Britain.

A declaration was published in February, 1780, by the empress of Russia, addressed to the courts of London, Versailles, and Madrid. In this it was observed, "that her imperial majesty had given such convincing proofs, of the strict regard she had for the rights of neutrality, and the liberty of commerce in general, that it might have been hoped her impartial conduct would have entitled her subjects to the enjoyment of the advantages belonging to neutral nations. Experience had, however, proved the contrary. Her subjects had been molested in their navigation, by the ships and privateers of the belligerent powers." Her majesty therefore declared, "that she found it necessary to remove these vexations, which had been offered to the commerce of Russia; but, before she came to any serious measures, she thought it just and equitable, to expose to the world, and particularly to the belligerent powers, the principles she had adopted for her conduct; which were as follow:

"That neutral ships should enjoy a free navigation, even from port to port, and on the coasts of the nations at war; that all effects, belonging to the belligerent powers, should be looked on as free on board such neutral ships, with an exception of places actually blocked up or besieged; and with a proviso, that they do not carry to the enemy contraband articles." These were limited by an explanation, so as



to "comprehend only warlike stores and ammunition." Her imperial majesty declared that, "she was firmly resolved to maintain these principles; and that, with the view of protecting the commerce and navigation of her subjects, she had given orders to fit out a considerable part of her naval force." This declaration was communicated to the States General; and the empress of Russia invited them to make a common cause with her, so far as such an union might serve to protect commerce and navigation. Similar communications and invitations were, also, made to the courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Lisbon. A civil answer was received from the court of Great Britain, and a very cordial one from the court of France. On this occasion, it was said by his most Christian majesty, "that what her imperial majesty claimed, from the belligerent powers, was nothing more than the rules prescribed to the French navy." The kings of Sweden and Denmark, also, formally acceded to the principles and measures, proposed by the empress of Russia. The States General did the same. The queen of Portugal refused to concur. The powers engaged in this association resolved to support each other, against any of the belligerent nations, who should violate the principles, which had been laid down, in the declaration of the empress of Russia.

This combination assumed the name of the armed neutrality. By it a respectable guarantee was procured to a commerce, from which France and Spain procured a plentiful supply of articles, essentially conducive to a vigorous prosecution of the war. The usurped authority of Great Britain, on the highway of nature, received a check. Her embarrassments, from this source, were aggravated by the consideration, that they came from a power, in whose friendship she had confided.

About the same time, the enemies of Great Britain were increased, by the addition of the States General. Though these two powers were bound to each other, by the obligations of treaties, the conduct of the latter had long been considered rather hostile than friendly. Few Europeans had a greater prospect of advantage from American independ-

ence, than the **Hollanders**. The conquest of the **United States** would have regained to **Great Britain** a monopoly of their trade; but the establishment of their independence promised, to other nations, an equal chance of participating therein. As commerce is the soul of the **United Netherlands**, to have neglected the present opportunity of extending it, would have been a deviation from their established maxims of policy. Former treaties, framed in distant periods, when other views were predominant, opposed but a feeble barrier to the claims of present interest. The past generation found it to their advantage to seek the friendship and protection of **Great Britain**. But they, who were now on the stage of life, had similar inducements to seek for new channels of trade. Though this could not be done, without thwarting the views of the court of **London**, their recollection of former favours was not sufficient, to curb their immediate favourite passion. From the year 1777, sir **Joseph Yorke**, the British minister at the **Hague**, had made sundry representations to their high mightinesses of the clandestine commerce, carried on between their subjects and the **Americans**. He particularly stated that **Mr. Van Graaf**, the governor of **St. Eustatia**, had permitted an illicit commerce with the **Americans**; and had, at one time, returned the salute of a vessel carrying their flag. Sir **Joseph**, therefore, demanded a formal disavowal of this salute, and the dismissal and immediate recall of governor **Van Graaf**. This insolent demand was answered with a pusillanimous temporising reply. On the 12th of September, 1778, a memorial was presented to the **States General**, from the merchants and others of **Amsterdam**, in which they complained that their lawful commerce was obstructed by the ships of his **Britannic majesty**. On the 22d of July, 1779, sir **Joseph Yorke** demanded of the **States General**, the succours stipulated in the treaty of 1678: but this was not complied with. Friendly declarations and unfriendly actions followed each other in alternate succession. At length, a declaration was published by the king of **Great Britain**, by which it was announced, "that the subjects of the **United Provinces** were, henceforth, to be considered upon the same

footing with other martial powers, not privileged by treaty." Throughout the whole of this period, the Dutch, by means of neutral ports, continued to supply the Americans; and the English to insult and intercept their navigation: but open hostilities were avoided by both. The former aimed principally at the gains of a lucrative commerce; the latter to remove all obstacles, which stood in the way of their favourite scheme, of conquering the Americans. The event, which occasioned a formal declaration of war, was the capture of Henry Laurens. In the deranged state of the American finances, that gentleman had been deputed by congress, to solicit a loan for their service, in the United Netherlands; and, also, to negotiate a treaty between them and the United States. On his way thither, in 1780, he was taken by the *Vestal* frigate, commanded by captain Kepple. He had thrown his papers overboard; but many of them were recovered, without having received much damage. His papers being delivered to the ministry, were carefully examined. Among them, was found one, purporting to be a plan of a treaty, of amity and commerce, between the states of Holland and the United States of America. This had been originally drawn up, in consequence of some conversation between William Lee, whom congress had appointed commissioner to the courts of Vienna and Berlin, and John de Neufville, merchant of Amsterdam, as a plan of a treaty, destined to be concluded hereafter: but it had never been proposed, either by congress or the states of Holland; though it had received the approbation of the Pensionary Van Berkel, and of the city of Amsterdam. As this was not an official paper, and had never been read in congress, the original was given to Mr. Laurens, as a paper that might be useful to him, in his projected negotiations. This unauthentic paper, which was in Mr. Laurens's possession by accident, and which was so nearly sunk in the ocean, proved the occasion of a national war. The court of Great Britain was highly offended at it. The paper itself, and some others relating to the same subject, were delivered to the prince of Orange, who laid them before the states of Holland and West-Friesland.

Sir Joseph Yorke presented a memorial to the States General, in which he asserted, “that the papers of Mr. Laurens, who styled himself president of the pretended congress, had furnished the discovery of a plot, unexampled in the annals of the republic; that it appeared by these papers, that the gentlemen of Amsterdam had been engaged in a clandestine correspondence with the American rebels, from the month of August, 1778; and that instructions and full powers had been given by them, for the conclusion of a treaty of amity, with rebels, who were the subjects of a sovereign, to whom the republic was united by the closest engagements.” He therefore, in the name of his master, demanded “a formal disavowal of this irregular conduct, a prompt satisfaction proportioned to the offence, and an exemplary punishment of the Pensionary Van Berkel, and his accomplices, as disturbers of the public peace, and violaters of the laws of nations. The States General disavowed the intended treaty of the city of Amsterdam, and engaged to prosecute the Pensionary, according to the laws of the country; but this was not deemed satisfactory. Sir Joseph<sup>a</sup> Yorke was ordered to withdraw from the Hague, and, soon afterwards, a manifesto against the Dutch was published in London. This was followed by an order of council, “that general reprisals be granted against the ships, goods, and subjects, of the States General.” Whatever may be thought of the policy of this measure, its boldness must be admired. Great Britain, already at war with the United States of America, and the monarchies of France and Spain, deliberately resolved on a war with Holland, at a time when she might have avoided open hostilities. Her spirit was still further evinced, by the consideration, that she was deserted by her friends, and without a single ally. Great must have been her resources, to support so extensive a war, against so many hostile sovereigns; but this very ability, by proving that her overgrown power was dangerous to the peace of Europe, furnished an apology for their combination against her.

A war with Holland being resolved upon, the storm of British vengeance first burst on the Dutch island of St. Eus-



tatia. This, though intrinsically of little value, had long been the seat of an extensive commerce. It was the grand free-port of the West Indies, and, as such, was a general market and magazine to all nations. In consequence of its neutrality and situation, together with its unbounded freedom of trade, it reaped the richest harvests of commerce, during the seasons of warfare among its neighbours. It was, in a particular manner, a convenient channel of supply to the Americans.

The island is a natural fortification, and very capable of being made strong; but, as its inhabitants were a motley mixture of transient persons, wholly intent on the gains of commerce, they were more solicitous to acquire property, than attentive to improve those means of security, which the island afforded.

Sir George Rodney and general Vaughan, with a large fleet and army, surrounded this island, and demanded a surrender thereof, and of its dependencies, within an hour. Mr. de Graaf returned for answer, "that, being utterly incapable of making any defence against the force, which invested the island, he must of necessity surrender it; only recommending the town and its inhabitants, to the known and usual clemency of British commanders."

The wealth accumulated in this barren spot was prodigious. The whole island seemed to be one vast magazine. The store-houses were filled, and the beach covered with valuable commodities. These, on a moderate calculation, were estimated to be worth above three millions sterling. All this property, together with what was found on the island, was indiscriminately seized, and declared to be confiscated. This valuable booty was further increased by new arrivals. The conquerors, for some time, kept up Dutch colours, which decoyed a number of French, Dutch, and American vessels into their hands. Above 150 merchant vessels, most of which were richly laden, were captured. A Dutch frigate of 38 guns, and five small armed vessels, shared the same fate. The neighbouring islands of St. Martin and Saba were in like manner reduced. Just before the arrival of the British, thirty large ships, laden with West India commodities, had sailed from Eus-

tatia for Holland, under the convoy of a ship of sixty guns. Admiral Rodney despatched the *Monarch* and *Panther*, with the *Sybil* frigate, in pursuit of this fleet. The whole of it was overtaken and captured.

The Dutch West India company, many of the citizens of Amsterdam, and several Americans, were great sufferers by the capture of this island, and the confiscation of all property found therein, which immediately followed; but the British merchants were much more so. These, confiding in the acknowledged neutrality of the island, and in acts of parliament, had accumulated therein great quantities of West India produce, as well as of European goods. They stated their hard case to admiral Rodney and general Vaughan, contending that their connexion with the captured island was under the sanction of acts of parliament, and that their commerce had been conducted, according to the rules and maxims of trading nations. To applications of this kind it was answered, "that the island was Dutch; every thing in it was Dutch, and under the protection of the Dutch flag; and as Dutch it should be treated."

The severity, with which the victors proceeded, drew on them pointed censures, not only from the immediate sufferers, but from all Europe. It must be supposed, that they were filled with resentment, for the supplies which the Americans received through this channel; but there is also reason to suspect, that the love of gain was cloaked under the specious veil of national policy.

The horrors of an universal havoc of property were realised. The merchants and traders were ordered to give up their books of correspondence, their letters, and also inventories of all their effects, inclusive of an exact account of all money and plate in their possession. The Jews were designated as objects of particular resentment. They were ordered to give up the keys of their stores; to leave their wealth and merchandise behind them; and to depart the island, without knowing the place of their destination. From a natural wish to be furnished with the means of supplying their wants, in the place of their future residence, they secreted, in their wearing

apparel, gold, silver, and other articles of great value and small bulk. The policy of these unfortunate Hebrews did not avail them. The avarice of the conquerors effectually counteracted their ingenuity. They were stripped, searched, and despoiled of their money and jewels. In this state of wretchedness, many of the inhabitants were transported as outlaws, and landed on St. Christopher's. The assembly of that island, with great humanity, provided for them such articles as their situation required. The Jews were soon followed by the Americans. Some of these, though they had been banished from the United States, on account of their having taken part with Great Britain, were banished a second time, by the conquering troops of the sovereign, in whose service they had previously suffered. The French merchants and traders were next ordered off the island; and, lastly, the native Dutch were obliged to submit to the same sentence. Many opulent persons, in consequence of these proceedings, were instantly reduced to extreme indigence.

In the meantime, public sales were advertised, and persons of all nations invited to become purchasers. The island of St. Eustatia became a scene of constant auctions. There never was a better market for buyers. The immense quantities, exposed for sale, reduced the price of many articles, far below their original cost. Many of the commodities, sold on this occasion, became, in the hands of their new purchasers, as effectual supplies to the enemies of Great Britain, as they could have been in case the island had not been captured. The spirit of gain, which led the traders of St. Eustatia to sacrifice the interests of Great Britain, influenced the conquerors to do the same. The friends of humanity, who wish that war was exterminated from the world, or entered into only for the attainment of national justice, must be gratified, when they are told, that this unexampled rapacity was one link in the great chain of causes, which, as hereafter shall be explained, greatly contributed to the capture of a large British army, in Yorktown, Virginia: an event which gave peace to contending nations. While admiral Rodney and his

officers were bewildered, in the sales of confiscated property, at St. Eustatia, and especially while his fleet was weakened, by a large detachment sent off to convoy their booty to Great Britain, the French were silently executing a well-digested scheme, which assured them a naval superiority on the American coast, to the total ruin of the British interest in the United States.



## CHAPTER XXII.

*The revolt of the Pennsylvania line ; of part of the Jersey troops ; distresses of the American army ; Arnold's invasion of Virginia.*

THOUGH general Arnold's address to his countrymen produced no effect, in detaching the soldiery of America, from the unproductive service of congress, their steadiness could not be accounted for, from any melioration of 1781 their circumstances. They still remained without pay, and without such cloathing as the season required. They could not be induced to enter the British service; but their complicated distresses at length broke out into deliberate mutiny. This event, which had been long expected, made its first threatening appearance, in the Pennsylvania line. The common soldiers, enlisted in that state, were, for the most part, natives of Ireland: but though not bound to America, by the accidental tie of birth, they were inferior to none in discipline, courage, or attachment to the cause of independence. They had, on all previous occasions, done their duty to admiration. An ambiguity, in the terms of their enlistment, furnished a pretext for their conduct. A great part of them were enlisted for three years, or during the war. The three years were expired; and the men insisted, that the choice of staying or going remained with them, while the officers contended that the choice was in the state.

The mutiny was excited, by the non-commissioned officers and privates, in the night of the 1st of January, 1781, and soon became so universal, in the line of that state, as to defy all opposition. The whole, except three regiments, upon a signal for the purpose, turned out under arms without their officers, and declared for a redress of grievances. The officers in vain endeavoured to quell them. Several were wounded; and a captain was killed in attempting it. General

Wayne presented his pistols, as if about to fire on them; they held their bayonets to his breast, and said: "we love and respect you; but if you fire, you are a dead man." "We are not going to the enemy. On the contrary, if they were now to come out, you should see us fight under your orders, with as much alacrity as ever; but we will no longer be amused. We are determined on obtaining what is our just due." Deaf to arguments and entreaties, they, to the number of 1300, moved off in a body, from Morristown, and proceeded, in good order, with their arms, and six field pieces to Princeton. They elected temporary officers from their own body, and appointed a serjeant major, who had formerly deserted from the British army, to be their commander. General Wayne forwarded provisions after them, to prevent their plundering the country for their subsistence. They invaded no man's property, further than their immediate necessities made unavoidable. This was readily submitted to by the inhabitants; who had long been used to exactions of the same kind, levied for similar purposes, by their lawful rulers. They professed that they had no object in view, but to obtain what was justly due to them, nor were their actions inconsistent with that profession.

Congress sent a committee of their body, consisting of general Sullivan, Mr. Mathews, Mr. Atlee, and Dr. Wither-  
spoon, to procure an accommodation. The revolt-ers were resolute in refusing any terms, of which a redress of their grievances was not the foundation. Every thing asked of their country, they might, at any time, after the 6th of January, have obtained from the British, by passing over into New York. This they refused. Their sufferings had exhausted their patience, but not their patriotism. Sir Henry Clinton, by confidential messengers, offered to take them under the protection of the British government; to pardon all their past offences; to have the pay due them from congress faithfully made up, without any expectation of military service in return, although it would be received, if voluntarily offered. It was recommended to them to move behind the South river, and it was promised, that a detachment of

British troops should be in readiness for their protection, as soon as desired. In the meantime, the troops passed over from New York to Staten Island, and the necessary arrangements were made for moving them into New Jersey, whensoever they might be wanted. The royal commander was not less disappointed than surprised, to find that the faithful, though revolting soldiers, disdained his offers. The messengers of sir Henry Clinton were seized, and delivered to general Wayne. President Reed and general Potter were appointed, by the council of Pennsylvania to accommodate matters with the revolted. They met them at Princeton, and agreed to dismiss all whose terms of enlistment were completed, and admitted the oath of each soldier to be evidence in his own case. A board of officers tried and condemned the British spies; and they were instantly executed. President Reed offered a purse of one hundred guineas to the mutineers, as a reward of their fidelity, in delivering up the spies; but they refused to accept it, saying, "that what they had done was only a duty they owed their country, and that they neither desired, nor would receive any reward, but the approbation of that country, for which they had so often fought and bled."

By these healing measures, the revolt was completely quelled; but the complaints of the soldiers, being founded in justice, were first redressed. Those whose time of service was expired obtained their discharges; and others had their arrears of pay in a great measure made up to them. A general amnesty closed the business. On this occasion, the commander in chief stated in a circular letter, to the four eastern states, the well-founded complaints of his army; and the impossibility of keeping them together, under the pressure of such a variety of sufferings. General Knox was requested to be the bearer of these dispatches; and to urge the states to an immediate exertion for the relief of the soldiers. He visited Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and Rhode Island; and, with great earnestness and equal success, described the wants of the army. Massachusetts gave twenty-four silver dollars to each man of her line; and also furnished

them with some cloathing. Other states, about the same time, made similar advances.

The spirit of mutiny proved contagious. About 160 of the Jersey troops followed the example of the Pennsylvania line; but they did not conduct with equal spirit, nor with equal prudence. They committed sundry acts of outrage against particular officers, while they affected to be submissive to others. Major general Howe, with a considerable force, was ordered to take methods for reducing them to obedience. Convinced that there was no medium between dignity and servility, but coercion, and that no other remedy could be applied without the deepest wound to the service, he determined to proceed against them with decision. General Howe marched from Kingwood about midnight; and, by the dawning of the next day, had his men in four different positions, to prevent the revolvers from making their escape. Every avenue being secured, Colonel Barber of the Jersey line was sent to them, with orders immediately to parade without arms; and to march to a particular spot of ground. Some hesitation appearing among them, colonel Sproat was directed to advance; and only five minutes were given to the mutineers, to comply with the orders which had been sent them. This had its effect; and they, to a man, marched without arms to the appointed ground. The Jersey officers gave a list of the leaders of the revolt; upon which general Howe desired them to select three of the greatest offenders. A field court martial was presently held upon these three; and they were unanimously sentenced to death. Two of them were executed on the spot; and the executioners were selected from among the most active in the mutiny. The men were divided into platoons, made public concessions to their officers, and promised, by future good conduct, to atone for past offences.

These mutinies alarmed the states; but did not produce permanent relief to the army. Their wants, with respect to provisions, were only partially supplied, and by expedients from one short time to another. The most usual was ordering an officer to seize on provisions wherever found. This dif-



ferred from robbing, only, in its being done by authority, for the public service, and in the officer being always directed to give the proprietor a certificate, of the quantity and quality of what was taken from him. At first, some reliance was placed on these certificates, as vouchers to support a future demand on the United States; but they soon became so common as to be of little value. Recourse was so frequently had to coercion, both legislative and military, that the people not only lost confidence in public credit, but became impatient under all exertions of authority, for forcing their property from them. That an army should be kept together, under such circumstances, so far exceeds credibility, as to make it necessary to produce some evidence of the fact. The American general Clinton, in a letter to Washington, dated at Albany, April 16th, 1781, wrote as follows: "there is not now, independent of Fort Schuyler, three days provision in the whole department, for the troops, in case of an alarm, nor any prospect of procuring any. The recruits of the new levies, I cannot receive, because I have nothing to give them. The Canadian families I have been obliged to deprive of their scanty pittance, contrary to every principle of humanity. The quarter master's department is totally useless. The public armory has been shut up for nearly three weeks, and a total suspension of every military operation has ensued." Soon after this, Washington was obliged to apply 9000 dollars, sent by the state of Massachusetts for the payment of her troops, to the use of the quarter master's department, to enable him to transport provisions from the adjacent states. Before he consented to adopt this expedient, he had consumed every ounce of provision, which had been kept as a reserve in the garrison of West-Point; and had strained impress by military force to so great an extent, that there was reason to apprehend the inhabitants, irritated by such frequent calls, would proceed to dangerous insurrections. Fort Schuyler, West-Point, and the posts up the North River, were on the point of being abandoned by their starving garrisons. At this period of the war, there was little or no circulating medium, either in the form of paper or specie; and in the

neighbourhood of the American army, there was a real want of necessary provisions. The deficiency of the former occasioned many inconveniences, and an unequal distribution of the burdens of the war; but the insufficiency of the latter had well nigh dissolved the army, and laid the country, in every direction, open to British excursions.

These events were not unforeseen by the rulers of America. From the progressive depreciation of their bills of credit, it had for some time past occurred, that the period could not be far distant, when they would cease to circulate. This crisis, ardently wished for by the enemies, and dreaded by the friends of American independence, took place in 1781; but without realising the hopes of the one, or the fears of the other. New resources were providentially opened; and the war was carried on with the same vigour as before. A great deal of gold and silver was, about this time, introduced into the United States, by a beneficial trade with the French and Spanish West India islands, and by means of the French army in Rhode Island. Pathetic representations were made to the ministers of his most Christian majesty by Washington, Dr. Franklin, and particularly by lieutenant colonel John Laurens, who was sent to the court of Versailles as a special minister on this occasion. The king of France gave the United States a subsidy of six millions of livres, and became their security for ten millions more, borrowed, for their use, in the United Netherlands. A regular system of finance was also, about this time, adopted. All matters, relative to the treasury, the supplies of the army, and the accounts, were put under the direction of Robert Morris, who arranged the whole with judgment and economy. The issuing of paper money, by the authority of government, was discontinued, and the public engagements were made payable in coin. The introduction of so much gold and silver, together with these judicious domestic regulations, aided by the bank, which had been erected, the preceding year, in Philadelphia, extricated congress from much of their embarrassment, and put it in their power to feed, cloath, and move their army.

About the same time, the old continental money, by com-

mon consent, ceased to have currency. Like an aged man, expiring by the decays of nature, without a sigh or a groan, it fell asleep in the hands of its last possessors. By the scale of depreciation the war was carried on five years, for little more than a million of pounds sterling; and two hundred millions of paper dollars were made redeemable by five millions of silver ones. In other countries, such measures would probably have produced popular insurrections; but, in the United States, they were submitted to without any tumults. Public faith was violated; but, in the opinion of most men, public good was promoted. The evils consequent on depreciation had taken place, and the redemption of the bills of credit, at their nominal value, as originally promised, instead of remedying the distresses of the sufferers, would, in many cases, have increased them, by subjecting their small remains of property to exorbitant taxation. The money had, in a great measure, gone out of the hands of the original proprietors, and was in the possession of others, who had obtained it, at a rate of value not exceeding what was fixed upon it, by the scale of depreciation.

Nothing could afford a stronger proof, that the resistance of America to Great Britain was grounded in the hearts of the people, than these events. To receive paper bills of credit, issued without any funds, and to give property in exchange for them, as equal to gold or silver, demonstrated the zeal and enthusiasm with which the war was begun; but to consent to the extinction of the same, after a currency of five years, without any adequate provision made for their future redemption, was more than would have been borne by any people, who conceived that their rulers had separate interests or views from themselves. The demise of one king, and the coronation of a lawful successor, have often excited greater commotions, in royal governments, than took place in the United States, on the sudden extinction of their whole current money. The people saw the necessity which compelled their rulers to act in the manner they had done; and, being well convinced that the good of the country was their object, quietly submitted to measures, which, under other circum-

stances, would scarcely have been expiated by the lives and fortunes of their authors.

While the Americans were suffering the complicated calamities, which introduced the year 1781, their adversaries were carrying on the most extensive plan of operations, which had ever been attempted since the war. It had often been objected to the British commanders, that they had not conducted the war, in the manner most likely to effect the subjugation of the revolted provinces. Military critics, in particular, found fault with them, for keeping a large army idle at New York, which, they said, if properly applied, would have been sufficient to make successful impressions, at one and the same time, on several of the states. The British seem to have calculated the campaign of 1781, with a view to make an experiment of the comparative merit of this mode of conducting military operations. The war raged in that year, not only in the vicinity of British head quarters, at New York, but in Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and in Virginia. The latter state, from its peculiar situation, and from the modes of building, planting, and living, adopted by the inhabitants, is particularly exposed, and lies at the mercy of whatever army is master of the Chesapeake. These circumstances, together with the pre-eminent rank which Virginia held in the confederacy, pointed out the propriety of making that state the object of particular attention. To favour lord Cornwallis's designs in the southern states, major general Leslie, with about 2000 men, had been detached from New York to the Chesapeake, in the latter end of 1780; but subsequent events induced his lordship to order him from Virginia to Charleston, with the view of his more effectually co-operating with the army under his own immediate command. Soon after the departure of general Leslie, Virginia was again invaded by another party from New York. This was commanded by general Arnold, now a brigadier in the royal army. His force consisted of about 1600 men, and was supported by such a number of armed vessels, as enabled him to commit extensive ravages, on the unprotected coasts of that well-watered country. The invaders landed about fifteen



miles below Richmond, and in two days marched into the town, where they destroyed large quantities of tobacco, salt, rum, sail-cloth, &c. Successive excursions were made to several other places, in which the royal army committed similar devastations.

In about a fortnight, they marched into Portsmouth, and began to fortify it. The loss they sustained from the feeble opposition of the dispersed inhabitants was inconsiderable. The havoc made by general Arnold, and the apprehension of a design to fix a permanent post in Virginia, induced general Washington to detach the marquis de la Fayette, with 1200 of the American infantry, to that state; and also to urge the French in Rhode Island to co-operate with him, in attempting to capture Arnold and his party. The French commanders eagerly closed with the proposal. Since they had landed in the United States, no proper opportunity of gratifying their passion for military fame, had yet presented itself. They rejoiced at that which now offered, and indulged a cheerful hope of rendering essential service to their allies, by cutting off the retreat of Arnold's party. With this view, their fleet with 1500 additional men on board, sailed from Rhode Island for Virginia. D'Estouches, who, since the death of de Ternay, on the preceding December, had commanded the French fleet, previous to the sailing of his whole naval force, despatched the *Eveill  *, a sixty-four gun ship, and two frigates, with orders to destroy the British ships and frigates in the Chesapeake. These took or destroyed ten vessels, and captured the *Romulus* of forty-four guns. Arbuthnot with a British fleet sailed from Gardiner's-bay, in pursuit of D'Estouches. The former overtook and engaged the latter off the capes of Virginia. The British had the advantage of more guns than the French; but the latter were much more strongly manned than the former. The contest between the fleets, thus nearly balanced, ended without the loss of a ship on either side; but the British obtained the fruits of victory, so far as to frustrate the whole scheme of their adversaries. The fleet of his most Christian majesty returned to Rhode Island, without effecting the object of the expedition. Thus

was Arnold saved from the imminent danger, of falling into the hands of his exasperated countrymen. The day before the French fleet returned to Newport, a convoy arrived in the Chesapeake from New York, with major general Philips, and about 2000 men. This distinguished officer, who, having been taken at Saratoga, had been lately exchanged, was appointed commander of the royal forces in Virginia. Philips and Arnold soon made a junction, and carried every thing before them. They successively defeated those bodies of militia which came in their way. The whole country was open to their excursions. On their embarkation from Portsmouth, a detachment visited York-town; but the main body proceeded to Williamsburgh. On the 22d of April, they reached Chickapowing. A party proceeded up that river ten or twelve miles, and destroyed much property. On the 24th, they landed at City-point, and soon afterwards marched for Petersburg. About one mile from the town, they were opposed by a small force commanded by Baron Steuben; but this, after making a gallant resistance, was compelled to retreat.

At Petersburg, they destroyed 4000 hogsheads of tobacco, a ship, and a number of small vessels. Within three days, one party marched to Chesterfield court-house, and burned a range of barracks, and 500 barrels of flour. At the same time, another party under the command of general Arnold marched to Osborne's. About four miles above that place, a small marine force was drawn up to oppose him. General Arnold sent a flag to treat with the commander of this fleet; but he declared that he would defend it to the last extremity. Upon this refusal, Arnold advanced with some artillery, and fired upon him with decisive effect from the banks of the river. Two ships, and ten small vessels loaded with tobacco, cordage, flour, &c. were captured. Four ships, five brigantines, and a number of small vessels were burnt or sunk. The quantity of tobacco, taken or destroyed in this fleet, exceeded 2000 hogsheads; and the whole was effected without the loss of a single man, on the side of the British. The royal forces then marched up the fork, till they arrived at Manchester. There they destroyed 1200 hogsheads of tobacco. Returning thence

they made great havoc at Warwick. They destroyed the ships on the stocks, and in the river, and a large range of rope walks. A magazine of 500 barrels of flour, with a number of warehouses, and of tan-houses, all filled with their respective commodities, were also consumed in one general conflagration. On the 9th of May, they returned to Petersburg; having, in the course of the preceding three weeks, destroyed property to an immense amount. With this expedition, major general Philips terminated a life, which in all his previous operations had been full of glory. At early periods of his military career, on different occasions of a preceding war, he had gained the approbation of prince Ferdinand, under whom he had served in Germany. As an officer he was universally admired. Though much of the devastations, committed by the troops under his command, may be vindicated on the principles of those who hold, that the rights and laws of war are of equal obligation, with the rights and laws of humanity; yet the friends of his fame have reason to regret, that he did not die three weeks sooner.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*Campaign of 1781. Operations in the two Carolinas and Georgia.*

THE successes which, with a few checks, followed the British arms, since they had reduced Savannah and Charleston, encouraged them to pursue their object, by advancing from south to north. A vigorous invasion of North Carolina was therefore projected, for the business of the winter, which followed general Gates's defeat. The Americans were sensible of the necessity of reinforcing, and supporting their southern army; but were destitute of the means of doing it. Their northern army would not admit of being further weakened; nor was there time to march over the intervening distance of seven hundred miles; but if men could have been procured, and time allowed for marching them to South Carolina, money, for defraying the unavoidable expenses of their transportation, could not be commanded, either in the latter end of 1780, or the first months of 1781. Though congress was unable to forward either men or money, for the relief of the southern states, they did what was equivalent. They sent them a general, whose head was a council, and whose military talents were equal to a reinforcement. The nomination of an officer, for this important trust, was left to general Washington. He mentioned general Greene, adding for reason, "that he was an officer, in whose abilities and integrity, from a long and intimate experience, he had the most entire confidence."

The army, after its defeat and dispersion, on the 16th of August, 1780, rendezvoused at Hillsborough. In the latter end of the year, they advanced to Charlotte-town. At this place general Gates transferred the command to general Greene. The manly resignation of the one was equalled by the delicate disinterestedness of the other. Expressions of civility, and acts of friendship and attention, were recipro-



cally exchanged. Greene, upon all occasions, was the vindicator of Gates's reputation. In his letters and conversation, he uniformly maintained, that his predecessor had failed in no part of his military duty ; and that he had deserved success, though he could not command it.

Within a few hours after Greene took charge of the army, a report was made of a successful enterprise of lieutenant colonel Washington. Being out on a foraging excursion, he had penetrated within thirteen miles of Camden, to Clermont, the seat of lieutenant colonel Rugely, of the British militia. This was fortified by a block-house, encompassed by an abbatis, and defended by upwards of one hundred of the inhabitants, who had submitted to the British government. Lieutenant colonel Washington advanced with his cavalry, and planted the trunk of a pine tree, so as to resemble a field piece. The lucky moment was seized, and a peremptory demand of an immediate surrender was made ; when the garrison was impressed with the expectation of an immediate cannonade, in case of their refusal. The whole surrendered at discretion, without a shot on either side. This fortunate incident, through the superstition to which most men are more or less subject, was viewed by the army as a presage of success under their new commander.

When general Greene took the command, he found the troops had made a practice of going home without permission, staying several days or weeks, and then returning to camp. Determined to enforce strict discipline, he gave out, that he would make an example of the first deserter of the kind he caught. One such being soon taken was accordingly shot, at the head of the army, drawn up to be spectators of the punishment. This had the desired effect, and put a stop to the dangerous practice.

The whole southern army at this time consisted of about 2000 men ; more than half of whom were militia. The regulars had been for a long time without pay, and were very deficient in cloathing. All sources of supply from Charleston were in possession of the British ; and no imported article could be obtained, from a distance less than two hundred

miles. The procuring of provisions for this small force was a matter of difficulty. The paper currency was depreciated so far, as to be wholly unequal to the purchase of even such supplies as the country afforded. Hard money had not a physical existence in any hands accessible to the Americans. The only resource left, for supplying the army, was by the arbitrary mode of impress. To seize on the property of the inhabitants, and, at the same time, to preserve their kind affections, was a difficult business, and of delicate execution; but of the utmost moment, as it furnished the army with provisions, without impairing the disposition of the inhabitants to co-operate with it, in recovering the country. This grand object called for the united efforts of both. Such was the situation of the country, that it was almost equally dangerous for the American army to go forward or stand still. In the first case, every thing was hazarded; in the last, the confidence of the people would be lost; and with it all prospect of being supported by them. The impatience of the suffering exiles and others led them to urge the adoption of rash measures. The mode of opposition they preferred was the least likely to effect their ultimate wishes. The nature of the country, thinly inhabited, abounding with swamps and covered with woods; the inconsiderable force of the American army, the number of the disaffected, and the want of magazines, weighed with general Greene to prefer a partisan war. By close application to his new profession, he had acquired a scientific knowledge of the principles and maxims for conducting wars in Europe; but considered them as often inapplicable to America. When they were adapted to his circumstances, he used them; but oftener deviated from them, and followed his own practical judgment, founded on a comprehensive view of his real situation.

With an inconsiderable army, miserably provided, general Greene took the field, against a superior British regular force, which had marched in triumph two hundred miles from the sea coast, and was flushed with successive victories through a whole campaign. Soon after he took the command, he divided his force, and sent general Morgan, with a re-

spectable detachment, to the western extremity of South Carolina; and, about the same time, marched with the main body to Hick's-creek, on the north side of the Pedee, opposite to Cheraw-Hill.

After the general submission of the militia, in the year 1780, a revolution took place, highly favourable to the interest of America. The residence of the British army, instead of increasing the real friends to royal government, diminished their number, and added new vigour to the opposite party. The British had a post in Ninety-Six, for thirteen months, during which time the country was filled with rapine, violence and murder. Applications were daily made for redress; yet, in that whole period, there was not a single instance wherein punishment was inflicted, either on the soldiery or the tories. The people soon found, that there was no security for their lives, liberties or property, under the military government of British officers, regardless of their civil rights. The peaceable citizens were reduced to that uncommon distress, in which they had more to fear from oppression, than resistance. They therefore most ardently wished for an American force. Under these favourable circumstances, general Greene detached general Morgan, to take a position in that district. The appearance of this force, a sincere attachment to the cause of independence, and the impolitic conduct of the British, induced several persons to resume their arms, and to act in concert with the continental troops.

When this irruption was made into the district of Ninety-Six, lord Cornwallis was far advanced, in his preparations for the invasion of North Carolina. To leave general Morgan in his rear, was contrary to military policy. In order therefore to drive him from this station, and to deter the inhabitants from joining him, lieutenant colonel Tarleton was ordered to proceed, with about 1100 men, and "push him to the utmost." He had two field pieces, and a superiority of infantry, in the proportion of five to four, and of cavalry in the proportion of three to one. Besides this inequality of force, two thirds of the troops under general Morgan were militia. With these fair prospects of success, Tarleton en-

gaged Morgan at the Cowpens, on the 17th of January, with the expectation of driving him out of South Carolina. The latter drew up his men in two lines. The whole of the southern militia, with 190 from North Carolina, were put under the command of colonel Pickens. These formed the first line, and were advanced a few hundred yards before the second, with orders to form on the right of the second, when forced to retire. The second line consisted of the light infantry, and a corps of Virginia militia riflemen. Lieutenant colonel Washington, with his cavalry, and about forty-five militia men, mounted and equipped with swords, were drawn up at some distance in the rear of the whole. The open wood, in which they were formed, was neither secured in front, flank, or rear. On the side of the British, the light legion infantry and fusileers, though worn down with extreme fatigue, were ordered to form in line. Before this order was executed, the line, though far from being complete, was led to the attack by Tarleton himself. They advanced with a shout, and poured in an incessant fire of musquetry. Colonel Pickens directed the men under his command to retain their fire, till the British were within forty or fifty yards. This order, though executed with great firmness, was not sufficient to repel their advancing foes. The militia fell back; but were soon rallied by their officers. The British advanced, and engaged the second line, which, after an obstinate conflict, was compelled to retreat to the cavalry. In this crisis, colonel Washington made a successful charge on Tarleton, who was cutting down the militia. Lieutenant colonel Howard, almost at the same moment, rallied the continental troops, and charged with fixed bayonets. The example was instantly followed by the militia. Nothing could exceed the astonishment and confusion of the British, occasioned by these unexpected charges. Their advance fell back on their rear, and communicated a panic to the whole. Tarleton's pieces of artillery were seized by the Americans; and the greatest confusion took place among his infantry. While they were in this state of disorder, lieutenant colonel Howard called to them, to "lay down their arms," and promised them good



quarters. Some hundreds accepted the offer, and surrendered. The first battalion of the 71st, and two British light infantry companies, laid down their arms to the American militia. A party, which had been left some distance in the rear, to guard the baggage, was the only body of infantry that escaped. The officer of that detachment, on hearing of Tarleton's defeat, destroyed a great part of the baggage, and retreated to lord Cornwallis. Three hundred of the British were killed or wounded, and above five hundred prisoners taken. Eight hundred muskets, two field pieces, thirty-five baggage-waggons, and one hundred dragoon horses, fell into the hands of the conquerors. The Americans had only twelve men killed and sixty wounded.

General Morgan's good conduct, on this memorable day, was honoured by congress with a gold medal. They also presented medals of silver to lieutenant colonels Washington and Howard, a sword to colonel Pickens, a brevet major to Edward Giles, the general's aid-de-camp, and a captaincy to Baron Glassbeck. Lieutenant colonel Tarleton, hitherto triumphant in a variety of skirmishes, on this occasion lost his laurels, though he was supported by the 7th regiment, one battalion of the 71st, and two companies of light infantry: and his repulse did more essential injury to the British interest, than was equivalent to all the preceding advantages he had gained. It was the first link in a chain of causes, which finally drew down ruin, both in North and South Carolina, on the royal interest. That impetuosity of Tarleton, which had acquired him great reputation, when on former occasions he had surprised an incautious enemy, or attacked a panic-struck militia, was at this time the occasion of his ruin. Impatient of delay, he engaged with fatigued troops, and led them on to action, before they were properly formed, and before the reserve had taken its ground. He was also guilty of a great oversight, in not bringing up a column of cavalry, to support and improve the advantages he had gained, when the Americans retreated.

Lord Cornwallis, though preparing to extend his conquests northwardly, was not inattentive to the security of South

Carolina. Besides the force at Charleston, he left a considerable body of troops, under the command of lord Rawdon. These were principally stationed at Camden, from which central situation they might easily be drawn forth to defend the frontiers, or to suppress insurrections. To facilitate the intended operations against North Carolina, major Craig, with a detachment of about three hundred men from Charleston, and a small marine force, took possession of Wilmington. While these arrangements were making, the year 1781 commenced, with the fairest prospects to the friends of British government. The arrival of general Leslie in Charleston, with his late command in Virginia, gave earl Cornwallis a decided superiority, and enabled him to attempt the reduction of North Carolina, with a force sufficient to bear down all probable opposition. Arnold was before him in Virginia, while South Carolina, in his rear, was considered as completely subdued. His lordship had much to hope and little to fear. His admirers flattered him with the expectation, that his victory at Camden would prove but the dawn of his glory; and that the events of the approaching campaign would immortalize his name as the conqueror, at least of the southern states. Whilst lord Cornwallis was indulging these pleasing prospects, he received intelligence, no less unwelcome than unexpected, that Tarleton, his favourite officer, in whom he placed the greatest confidence, instead of driving Morgan out of the country, was completely defeated by him. This surprised and mortified, but did not discourage his lordship. He hoped, by vigorous exertions, soon to obtain reparation for the late disastrous event, and even to recover what he had lost. With the expectation of retaking the prisoners, captured at the Cowpens, and to obliterate the impression made by the issue of the late action at that place, his lordship instantly determined on the pursuit of general Morgan, who had moved off towards Virginia with his prisoners. The movements of the royal army, in consequence of this determination, induced general Greene immediately to retreat from Hick's-creek, lest the British, by crossing the upper sources of the Pedee, should get be-

tween him and the detachment, which was incumbered with the prisoners. In this critical situation, general Greene left the main army, under the command of general Huger, and rode 150 miles through the country, to join the detachment under general Morgan; that he might be in front of lord Cornwallis, and direct the motions of both divisions of his army, so as to form a speedy junction between them. Immediately after the action, on the 17th of January, Morgan sent on his prisoners under a proper guard; and, having made every arrangement in his power for their security, retreated with expedition. Nevertheless the British gained ground upon him. Morgan intended to cross the mountains with his detachment and prisoners, that he might more effectually secure the latter: but Greene, on his arrival, ordered the prisoners to Charlotteville, and directed the troops to Guilford court-house; to which place he had also ordered general Huger, to proceed with the main army.

In this retreat, the Americans underwent hardships almost incredible. Many of them performed this march without shoes, over frozen ground, which so gashed their naked feet, that their blood marked every step of their progress. They were sometimes without meat, often without flour, and always without spirituous liquors. Their march led through a barren country, which scarcely afforded necessaries for a few straggling inhabitants. In this severe season, also with very little cloathing, they were daily reduced to the necessity of fording deep creeks, and of remaining wet without any change of cloaths, till the heat of their bodies, and occasional fires in the woods dried their tattered rags. To all these difficulties they submitted, without the loss of a single sentinel by desertion. Lord Cornwallis reduced the quantity of his own baggage; and the example was followed by the officers under his command. Every thing not necessary in action, or to the existence of the troops, was destroyed. No waggons were reserved, except those loaded with hospital stores, salt, and ammunition, and four empty ones for the use of the sick. The royal army, encouraged by the example of his lordship, submitted to every hardship with cheerfulness. They beheld,

without murmuring, their most valuable baggage destroyed, and their spirituous liquors staved, when they were entering on hard service, and under circumstances which precluded every prospect of supply.

The British had urged the pursuit with so much rapidity, that they reached the Catawba, on the evening of the same day on which their fleeing adversaries had crossed it. Before the next morning, a heavy fall of rain made that river impassable. The Americans, confident of the justice of their cause, considered this event as an interposition of Providence in their favour. It is certain that, if the rising of the river had taken place a few hours earlier, general Morgan, with his whole detachment, and 500 prisoners, would have scarcely had any chance of escape. When the fresh had subsided, so far as to leave the river fordable, a large proportion of the king's troops received orders to be in readiness to march at one o'clock in the morning. Feints had been made of passing at several different fords; but the real attempt was made at a ford near M-Cowan's, the north banks of which were defended by a small guard of militia commanded by general Davidson. The British marched through the river upwards of five hundred yards wide, and about three feet deep, sustaining a constant fire from the militia on the opposite bank without returning it, till they had made good their passage. The light infantry and grenadier companies, as soon as they reached the land, dispersed the Americans. General Davidson, the brave leader of the latter, was killed at the first onset. The militia throughout the neighbouring settlements were dispirited, and but few of them could be persuaded to take or keep the field. A small party, which collected about ten miles from the ford, was attacked and dispersed by lieutenant colonel Tarleton. All the fords were abandoned, and the whole royal army crossed over, without any further opposition. The passage of the Catawba being effected, the Americans continued to flee, and the British to pursue. The former, by expeditious movements, crossed the Yadkin, partly in flats, and partly by fording on the second and third days of February; and secured their boats on the north side.



Though the British were close in their rear, yet the want of boats, and the rapid rising of the river from preceding rains, made the crossing impossible. This second hair-breadth escape was considered by the Americans as a further evidence, that their cause was favoured by heaven. That they, in two successive instances, should effect their passage, while their pursuers, only a few miles in their rear, could not follow, impressed the religious people of that settlement with such sentiments of devotion, as added fresh vigour to their exertions, in behalf of American independence.

The British, having failed in their first scheme of passing the Yadkin, were obliged to cross at the upper fords; but before this was completed, the two divisions of the American army made a junction at Guilford court-house. Though this had taken place, their combined numbers were so much inferior to the British, that general Greene could not with any propriety risk an action. He therefore called a council of officers, who unanimously concurred in opinion, that he ought to retire over the Dan, and to avoid an engagement till he was reinforced. Lord Cornwallis, knowing the inferiority of the American force, conceived hopes, by getting between general Greene and Virginia, to cut off his retreat, intercept his supplies and reinforcements, and oblige him to fight under many disadvantages. With this view, his lordship kept the upper country, where only the rivers are fordable; supposing that his adversaries, from the want of a sufficient number of flats, could not make good their passage in the deep water below; or, in case of their attempting it, he expected to overtake and force them to action, before they could cross. In this expectation he was deceived. General Greene by good management eluded his lordship. The British urged their pursuit with so much rapidity, that the American light troops were, on the 14th, compelled to retire upwards of forty miles. By the most indefatigable exertions general Greene had that day transported his army, artillery, and baggage, over the river Dan into Virginia. So rapid was the pursuit, and so narrow the escape, that the van of the pursuing British just arrived, as the rear of the Americans

had crossed. The hardships and difficulties which the royal army had undergone in this march, were exceeded by the mortification, that all their toils and exertions were to no purpose. They conceived it next to impossible, that general Greene could escape, without receiving a decisive blow. They therefore cheerfully submitted to difficulties, of which those, who reside in cultivated countries, can form no adequate ideas. After surmounting incredible hardships, when they fancied themselves within grasp of their object, they discovered that all their hopes were blasted.

The continental army being driven out of North Carolina, lord Cornwallis thought the opportunity favourable for assembling the loyalists. With this view he left the Dan, and proceeded to Hillsborough. On his arrival there, he erected the king's standard, and published a proclamation, inviting all loyal subjects to repair to it, with their arms and ten days provision, and assuring them of his readiness to concur with them in effectual measures for suppressing the remains of rebellion, and for the re-establishment of good order and constitutional government. Soon after the king's standard was erected at Hillsborough, some hundreds of the inhabitants rode into the British camp. They seemed to be very desirous of peace, but averse to any co-operation for procuring it. They acknowledged the continentals were chased out of the province; but expressed their apprehensions, that they would soon return, and, on the whole, declined to take any decided part in a cause, which yet appeared dangerous. Notwithstanding the indifference or timidity of the loyalists near Hillsborough, lord Cornwallis hoped for substantial aid from the inhabitants between Haw and Deep rivers. He therefore detached lieutenant colonel Tarleton, with 450 men, to give countenance to the friends of royal government in that district. Greene, being informed that many of the inhabitants had joined his lordship, and that they were repairing in great numbers to make their submission, was apprehensive, that unless some spirited measure was immediately taken, the whole country would be lost to the Americans. He therefore concluded, at every hazard, to recross the Dan.

This was done by the light troops; and these, on the next day, were followed by the main body, accompanied with a brigade of Virginia militia. Immediately after the return of the Americans to North Carolina, some of their light troops, commanded by general Pickens and lieutenant colonel Lee, were detached in pursuit of Tarleton, who had been detached to encourage the insurrection of the loyalists. Three hundred and fifty of these tories, commanded by colonel Pyles, when on their way to join the British, fell in with this light American party, and mistook them for the royal detachment sent for their support. The Americans attacked them, labouring under this mistake, to great advantage; and cut them down as they were crying out, "God save the king," and making protestations of their loyalty. Natives of the British colonies, who were of this character, more rarely found mercy than European soldiers. They were considered by the whig Americans as cowards, who not only wanted spirit to defend their constitutional rights, but unnaturally co-operated with strangers, in fixing the chains of foreign domination on themselves and countrymen. Many of them, on this occasion, suffered the extremity of military vengeance. Tarleton was refreshing his legion, about a mile from this scene of slaughter. Upon hearing the alarm, he re-crossed the Haw, and returned to Hillsborough. On his retreat, he cut down several of the royalists, as they were advancing to join the British army, mistaking them for the rebel militia of the country. These events, together with the return of the American army, upset all the schemes of lord Cornwallis. The tide of public sentiment was no longer in his favour. The recruiting service in behalf of the royal army was entirely stopped. The absence of the American army, for one fortnight longer, might have turned the scale. The advocates for royal government, being discouraged by these adverse accidents, and being also generally deficient in that ardent zeal which characterised the patriots, could not be induced to act with confidence. They were so dispersed, over a large extent of a thinly settled country, that it was difficult to bring them to unite in any common plan. They had no superintend-

ing congress, to give system or concert to their schemes. While each little district pursued separate measures, all were obliged to submit to the American governments. Numbers of them, who were on their way to join lord Cornwallis, struck with terror at the unexpected return of the American army, and with the unhappy fate of their brethren, went home to wait events. Their policy was of that timid kind, which disposed them to be more attentive to personal safety, than to the success of either army.

Though general Greene had re-crossed, his plan was not to risk an immediate action; but to keep alive the courage of his party; to depress that of the loyalists; and to harass the foragers and detachments of the British, till reinforcements should arrive. While Greene was unequal even to defensive operations, he lay seven days within ten miles of Cornwallis's camp; but took a new position every night, and kept it a profound secret where the next was to be. By such frequent movements, lord Cornwallis could not gain intelligence of his situation, in time to profit by it. He manœuvred in this manner, to avoid an action for three weeks, during which time, he was often obliged to ask bread from the common soldiers, having none of his own. By the end of that period, two brigades of militia from North Carolina, and one from Virginia, together with 400 regulars, raised for eighteen months, joined his army, and gave him a superiority of numbers. He then determined no longer to avoid an engagement. Lord Cornwallis, having long sought for this, no longer delay took place on either side. A battle took place on the 15th of March, 1781, at Guilford court-house. The American army consisted of about four thousand four hundred men, of which more than one half were militia. The British of about two thousand four hundred, chiefly troops grown veteran in victories. The former was drawn up in three lines. The front composed of North Carolina militia, the second of Virginia militia, the third and last of continental troops, commanded by general Huger and colonel Williams. After a brisk cannonade in front, the British advanced in three columns; the Hessians on the right, the guards in the centre, and lieutenant



colonel Webster's brigade on the left; and attacked the front line. It gave way, when the adversaries were at the distance of 140 yards. This was occasioned by the misconduct of a colonel, who, on the advance of the enemy, called out to an officer at some distance, "that he would be surrounded." The alarm was sufficient. Without inquiring into the probability of what had been injudiciously suggested, the militia precipitately quitted the field. As one good officer may sometimes mend the face of affairs, so the misconduct of a bad one may injure a whole army. Untrained men, when on the field, are similar to each other. The difference of their conduct depends much on incidental circumstances, and on none more than the manner of their being led on, and the quality of the officers by whom they are commanded.

The Virginia militia stood their ground, and kept up their fire till they were ordered to retreat. General Stevens, their commander, had posted forty riflemen at equal distances, twenty paces in the rear of his brigade, with orders to shoot every man who should leave his post. That brave officer, though wounded through the thigh, did not quit the field. The continental troops were last engaged, and maintained the conflict with great spirit, for an hour and a half. At length the discipline of veteran troops gained the day. They broke the second Maryland brigade, turned the American left flank, and got in rear of the Virginia brigade. They appeared to be gaining Greene's right, which would have encircled the whole of the continental troops. A retreat was therefore directed. This was made in good order, and no further than over the Reedy-fork; a distance of about three miles. Greene halted there, and drew up, till he had collected most of the stragglers, and then retired to Speedwell's iron-works, ten miles distant from Guilford. The Americans lost four pieces of artillery and two ammunition waggons. The victory cost the British dearly. Their killed and wounded amounted to several hundreds. The guards lost colonel Stuart and three captains, besides subalterns. Colonel Webster, an officer of distinguished merit, died of his wounds, to the great regret of the whole royal army. Generals O'Hara, and Howard,

and lieutenant colonel Tarleton, were wounded. About 300 of the continentals, and 100 of the Virginia militia, were killed or wounded. Among the former was major Anderson, of the Maryland line, a most valuable officer; of the latter were generals Huger and Stevens. The early retreat of the North Carolinians saved them from much loss. The American army sustained a great diminution, by the numerous fugitives, who, instead of rejoining the camp, went to their homes. Lord Cornwallis suffered so much, that he was in no condition to improve the advantage he had gained. The British had only the name; the Americans, all the good consequences of a victory. General Greene retreated, and lord Cornwallis kept the field; but, notwithstanding, the British interest in North Carolina was from that day ruined.

Soon after this action, lord Cornwallis issued a proclamation, setting forth his complete victory, calling on all loyal subjects to stand forth, and take an active part in restoring order and good government, and offering a pardon and protection to all rebels, murderers excepted, who would surrender themselves on or before the 20th of April. On the next day after this proclamation was issued, his lordship left his hospital, and seventy-five wounded men, with the numerous loyalists in the vicinity, and began a march towards Wilmington, which had the appearance of a retreat. Major Craig, who for the purposes of co-operating with his lordship, had been stationed at Wilmington, was not able to open a water communication with the British army, while they were in the upper country. The distance, the narrowness of Cape Fear river, the commanding elevation of its banks, and the hostile sentiments of the inhabitants on each side of it, forbade the attempt. The destitute condition of the British army made it necessary to go to their supplies, which for these reasons could not be brought to them.

General Greene no sooner received information of this movement of lord Cornwallis, than he put his army in motion to follow him. As he had no means of providing for his own wounded, or the British, he wrote a letter to the neighbouring inhabitants of the Quaker persuasion, in which he men-

tioned his being brought up a Quaker, and urged them to take care of the wounded on both sides. His recommendations prevailed, and the Quakers supplied the hospitals with every comfort in their power.

The Americans continued the pursuit of lord Cornwallis, till they had arrived at Ramsay's mill, on Deep river ; but, for good reasons, desisted from following him any further.

Lord Cornwallis halted and refreshed his army, for about three weeks at Wilmington, and then marched across the country, to Petersburg, in Virginia. Before it was known, that his lordship had determined on this movement, the bold resolution of returning to South Carolina was formed by general Greene. This animated the friends of congress in that quarter. Had the American army followed his lordship, the southern states would have conceived themselves conquered ; for their hopes and fears prevailed just as the armies marched north or south. Though lord Cornwallis marched through North Carolina to Virginia, yet, as the American army returned to South Carolina, the people considered that movement of his lordship in the light of a retreat.

While the two armies were in North Carolina, the whig inhabitants of South Carolina were animated by the gallant exertions of Sumter and Marion. These distinguished partisans, while surrounded with enemies, kept the field, and prepared the way for the return of general Greene. Though the continental army was driven into Virginia, they did not despair of the commonwealth. Having mounted their followers, their motions were rapid, and their attacks unexpected. With their light troops, they intercepted the British convoys of provisions, infested their out-posts, beat up their quarters, and harassed their detachments, with such frequent alarms, that they were obliged to be always on their guard. In the western extremity of the state, Sumter was powerfully supported by colonels Niel, Lacey, Hill, Winn, Bratton, Brandon and others ; each of whom held militia commissions, and had many friends. In the north-eastern extremity, Marion received in like manner great assistance from the active exertions of colonels Peter Horry, and Hugh Horry,

lieutenant-colonel John Baxter, colonel James Postell, major John Postell, and major John James.

The inhabitants, either as affection or vicinity induced them, arranged themselves under some of the militia officers, and performed many gallant enterprises. These, being for the most part skirmishes with small parties, were too numerous to be particularly related: but, in general, they displayed the determined spirit of the people, and embarrassed the British. One, in which major John Postell commanded, may serve as an illustration of the spirit of the times, and particularly of the indifference for property which then prevailed. Captain James de Peyster of the royal army, with twenty-five grenadiers, having taken post in the house of the major's father, the major posted his small command of twenty-one militia men, in such positions as commanded its doors, and demanded their surrender. This being refused, he set fire to an out-house, and was proceeding to burn that in which they were posted; and nothing but the immediate submission of the whole party restrained him from sacrificing his father's valuable property, to gain an advantage to his country.

While lord Cornwallis was preparing to invade Virginia, general Greene determined to re-commence offensive military operations in the southern extreme of the confederacy, in preference to pursuing his lordship into Virginia. General Sumter, who had warmly urged this measure, was about this time authorised to raise a state brigade, to be in service for eighteen months. He had also prepared the militia to co-operate with the returning continentals. With these forces, an offensive war was re-commenced in South Carolina, and prosecuted with spirit and success.

Before Greene set out on his march for Carolina, he sent orders to general Pickens, to prevent supplies from going to the British garrisons, at Ninety-Six, and Augusta, and also detached lieutenant-colonel Lee to advance before the continental troops. The latter, in eight days, penetrated through the intermediate country to general Marion's quarters, upon the Santee. The main army, in a few more days, completed



their march from Deep river to Camden. The British had erected a chain of posts from the capital to the extreme districts of the state, which had regular communications with each other. Lord Cornwallis being gone to Virginia, these became objects of enterprise to the Americans. While general Greene was marching with his main force against Camden, Fort Watson, which lay between Camden and Charleston, was invested by general Marion and lieutenant-colonel Lee. The besiegers speedily erected a work, which overlooked the fort, though that was built on an Indian mount upwards of thirty feet high, from which they fired into it with such execution that the besieged durst not show themselves. Under these circumstances the garrison, consisting of one hundred and fourteen men, surrendered by capitulation.

Camden, before which the main American army was encamped, is a village situated on a plain, covered on the south and east sides by the Wateree, and a creek; on the western and northern by six redoubts. It was defended by lord Rawdon, with about 900 men. The American army, consisting only of about an equal number of continentals, and between two and three hundred militia, was unequal to the task of carrying this post by storm, or of completely investing it. General Greene therefore took a good position, about a mile distant, in expectation of alluring the garrison out of their lines. Lord Rawdon armed his whole force, and with great spirit sallied out. An engagement ensued. Victory for some time evidently inclined to the Americans; but, in the progress of the action, the premature retreat of two companies eventually occasioned the defeat of the whole army. Greene, with his usual firmness, instantly took measures to prevent lord Rawdon from improving the success he had obtained. He retreated with such order, that most of his wounded, and all his artillery, together with a number of prisoners, were carried off. The British retired to Camden, and the Americans encamped about five miles from their former position. Their loss was between two and three hundred. Soon after this action, general Greene, knowing that the British garrison could not subsist long in Camden,

without fresh supplies from Charleston or the country, took such positions as were most likely to prevent their getting any.

Lord Rawdon received a reinforcement of 4 or 500 men, by the arrival of colonel Watson from Pedee. With this increase of strength, he attempted on the next day to compel general Greene to another action; but found it impracticable. Failing in this design, he returned to Camden, and burned the jail, mills, many private houses, and a great deal of his own baggage. He then evacuated the post, and retired to the southward of Santee. His lordship discovered as much prudence in evacuating Camden, as he had shown bravery in its defence. The fall of Fort Watson broke the chain of communication with Charleston; and the position of the American army, in a great measure, intercepted supplies from the adjacent country. The British, in South Carolina, now cut off from all communication with lord Cornwallis, would have hazarded the capital, by keeping large detachments in their distant out-posts. They, therefore, resolved to contract their limits by retiring within the Santee. This measure animated the friends of congress, in the extremities of the state, and disposed them to co-operate with the American army. While Greene lay in the neighbourhood of Camden, he hung in one day eight soldiers who had deserted from his army. This had such effect afterwards, that there was no desertion for three months. On the day after the evacuation of Camden, the post at Orangeburg, consisting of seventy British militia, and twelve regulars, surrendered to general Sumter. On the next day, Fort Motte capitulated. This was situated above the fork on the south side of the Congaree. The British had built their works round Mrs. Motte's dwelling house. She, with great cheerfulness, furnished the Americans with materials for firing her own house. These, being thrown by them on its roof, soon kindled into flame. The firing of the house, which was in the centre of the British works, compelled the garrison, consisting of 165 men, to surrender at discretion.

In two days more, the British evacuated their post at Nel-

son's ferry, and destroyed a great part of their stores. On the day following, Fort Granby, garrisoned by 352 men, mostly royal militia, surrendered to lieutenant-colonel Lee. Very advantageous terms were given them, from an apprehension, that lord Rawdon was marching to their relief.

Their baggage was secured, in which was included an immense quantity of plunder. The American militia were much disgusted at the terms allowed the garrison, and discovered a disposition to break the capitulation, and kill the prisoners; but Greene restrained them, by declaring, in the most peremptory manner, that he would instantly put to death any one, who should offer violence to those who, by surrendering, were under his protection.

General Marion, with a party of militia, marched about this time to Georgetown, and began regular approaches against the British post in that place. On the first night after his men had broken ground, their adversaries evacuated their works, and retreated to Charleston. Shortly afterwards, one Manson, an inhabitant of South Carolina, who had joined the British, appeared in an armed vessel, and demanded permission to land his men in the town. This being refused, he sent a few of them ashore, and set fire to it. Upwards of forty houses were speedily reduced to ashes.

In the rapid manner just related, the British lost six posts, and abandoned all the north-eastern extremities of South Carolina. They still retained possession of Augusta and Ninety-Six, in addition to their posts near the sea coast. Immediately after the surrender of Fort Granby, lieutenant colonel Lee began his march for Augusta, and in four days completed it.

The British post at Silver-Bluff, with a field piece and considerable stores, surrendered to a detachment of Lee's legion, commanded by captain Rudolph. Lee, on his arrival at Augusta, joined Pickens, who, with a body of militia, had, for some time past, taken post in the vicinity. They jointly carried on their approaches against Fort Cornwallis, at Augusta, in which colonel Brown commanded. Two batteries

were erected within thirty yards of the parapet, which overlooked the fort. From these eminences, the American riflemen shot into the inside of the works with success. The garrison buried themselves in a great measure under ground, and obstinately refused to capitulate, till the necessity was so pressing, that every man, who attempted to fire on the besiegers, was immediately shot down. At length, when further resistance would have been madness, the fort, with about 300 men, surrendered, on honourable terms of capitulation. The Americans, during the siege, had about forty men killed and wounded. After the surrender, lieutenant colonel Grierson, of the British militia, was shot by the Americans. A reward of 100 guineas was offered, but in vain, for the perpetrator of the perfidious deed. Lieutenant colonel Brown would probably have shared the same fate, had not his conquerors furnished him with an escort, to the royal garrison in Savannah. Individuals, whose passions were inflamed by injuries, and exasperated with personal animosity, were eager to gratify revenge in violation of the laws of war. Murders had produced murders. Plundering, assassinations, and house burnings, had become common. Zeal for the king or the congress were the ostensible motives of action; but in several of both sides, the love of plunder, private pique, and a savageness of disposition, led to actions which were disgraceful to human nature. Such was the state of parties in the vicinity of Savannah river, and such the exasperation of whigs against tories, and of tories against whigs; and so much had they suffered from, and inflicted on each other, that the laws of war, and the precepts of humanity afforded but a feeble security, for the observance of capitulations on either side. The American officers exerted themselves, to procure, to their prisoners, that safety which many of the inhabitants, influenced by a remembrance of the sufferings of themselves, and of their friends, were unwilling to allow them.

While operations were carrying on against the small posts, Greene proceeded, with his main army, and laid siege to Ninety-Six, in which lieutenant colonel Cruger, with up-



wards of 500 men, was advantageously posted. On the left of the besiegers was a work, in the form of a star. On the right was a strong stockade fort, with two block houses in it. The town was also picquetted in with strong picquets, and surrounded with a ditch, and a bank, near the height of a common parapet. The besiegers were more numerous than the besieged; but the disparity was not great.

The garrison defended themselves with spirit and address. On the morning after the siege began, a party sallied from the garrison, and drove the advance of the besiegers from their works. The next night, two strong block batteries were erected at the distance of 350 yards. Another battery, twenty feet high, was erected within 220 yards; and soon afterwards a fourth one was erected, within 100 yards of the main fort; and, lastly, a rifle battery was erected thirty feet high, within thirty yards of the ditch: from all of which the besiegers fired into the British works. The abatis was turned, and a mine and two trenches were so far extended, as to be within six feet of the ditch. At that interesting moment, intelligence was conveyed into the garrison, that lord Rawdon was near at hand, with about 2000 men, for their relief. These had arrived in Charleston from Ireland, after the siege began, and were marched for Ninety-Six, on the seventh day after they landed. In these circumstances, general Greene had no alternative, but to raise the siege, or attempt the reduction of the place by assault. The latter was resolved upon. Though the assailants displayed great resolution, they failed of success. General Greene raised the siege, and retreated over Saluda. His loss, in the assault and previous conflicts, was about 150 men. Lieutenant colonel Cruger deservedly gained great reputation, by his successful defence. He was particularly indebted to major Greene, who had bravely and judiciously defended that redoubt, for the reduction of which, the greatest exertions had been made. Truly distressing was the situation of the American army. When they were nearly masters of the whole country, they were compelled to seek safety by retreating to its remotest extremity. In this gloomy situation, Greene was advised to retire,

with his remaining force to Virginia. To suggestions of this kind he nobly replied: "I will recover South Carolina, or die in the attempt. This distinguished officer, whose genius was most vigorous in those perilous extremities, when feeble minds abandond themselves to despair, adopted the only expedient now left him; that of avoiding an engagement, till the British force should be divided. Lord Rawdon, who by rapid marches, was near Ninety-Six, at the time of the assault, pursued the Americans as far as the Enoree river; but without overtaking them. Desisting from this fruitless pursuit, he drew off a part of his force from Ninety-Six, and fixed a detachment on the Congaree. General Greene, on hearing that the British forces were divided, faced about to give them battle. Lord Rawdon, no less surprised than alarmed at this unexpected movement of his lately retreating foe, abandoned the Congaree, in two days after he had reached it, and marched to Orangeburg. General Greene, in his turn pursued, and offered him battle. His lordship would not venture out; and his adversary was too weak to attack him in his encampment, with any prospect of success.

Reasons, similar to those which induced the British to evacuate Camden, weighed with them about this time, to withdraw their troops from Ninety-Six. While the American army lay near Orangeburg, lieutenant colonel Cruger, having evacuated the post he had gallantly defended, was marching with the troops of that garrison, through the forks of Edisto, to join lord Rawdon, at Orangeburg. General Greene, being unable to prevent their junction, and still less to stand before their combined force, retired to the high hills of Santec. The evacuation of Camden having been effected, by striking at the posts below it, the same manœuvre was now attempted to induce the British to leave Orangeburg. With this view, generals Sumter and Marion, with their brigades, and the legion of cavalry, were detached to Monk's-Corner and Dorchester. They moved down different roads, and commenced separate and successful attacks, on convoys and detachments, in the vicinity of Charleston. In this manner was the war carried on. While the British kept their

forces compact, they could not cover the country, and the American general had the prudence to avoid fighting. When they divided their army, their detachments were attacked and defeated. While they were in the upper country, light parties of Americans annoyed their small posts in the lower settlements. The people soon found that the late conquerors were not able to afford them their promised protection. The spirit of revolt became general, and the royal interest daily declined.

The British, having evacuated all their posts to the northward of Santee and Congaree, and to the westward of Edisto, conceived themselves able to hold all that fertile country, which is in a great measure enclosed by these rivers. They, therefore, once more resumed their station, near the junction of the Wateree and Congaree. This induced Greene to concert further measures, for forcing them down towards Charleston. He, therefore, crossed the Wateree and Congaree, and collected his whole force on the south of the latter, intending to act offensively. On his approach, the British retired about forty miles nearer Charleston, and took post at the Eutaw Springs. Greene advanced with 2000 men, to attack them, in their encampment, at this place. His force was drawn up in two lines. The first was composed of militia, and the second of continental troops. As the Americans advanced, they fell in with two parties of the British, three or four miles ahead of their main army. These, being briskly attacked, soon retired. The militia continued to pursue and fire, till the action became general, and till they were obliged to give way. They were well supported by the continental troops. In the hottest of the action, colonel O. Williams, and lieutenant colonel Campbell, with the Maryland and Virginia continentals, charged with trailed arms. Nothing could surpass the intrepidity of both officers and men on this occasion. They rushed on in good order, through a heavy cannonade, and a shower of musquetry, with such unshaken resolution, that they bore down all before them. Lieutenant colonel Campbell, while bravely leading his men on to that successful charge, received a mortal wound. After he had

fallen, he inquired who gave way; and, being informed that the British were fleeing in all quarters, replied, "I die contented," and immediately expired. The British were vigorously pursued, and upwards of five hundred of them were taken prisoners. On their retreat, they took post in a strong brick house, and in a picquetted garden. From these advantageous positions, they renewed the action. Four six pounders were ordered up before the house, from under cover of which the British were firing. The Americans were compelled to leave these pieces and retire; but they left a strong picquet on the field of battle, and only retreated to the nearest water in their rear. In the evening of the next day, lieutenant colonel Stuart, who commanded the British on this occasion, left seventy of his wounded men, and a thousand stand of arms, and moved from the Eutaws towards Charleston. The loss of the British, inclusive of prisoners, was upwards of 1100 men; that of the Americans above 500, in which number were sixty officers.

Congress honoured general Greene, for his good conduct in this action, with a British standard, and a gold medal. They also voted their thanks to the different corps, and their commanders.

Soon after this engagement, the Americans retired to their former position, on the high hills of Santee; and the British took post in the vicinity of Monk's-Corner. In the close of the year, Greene moved down into the lower country; and, about the same time, the British abandoned their out-posts, and retired, with their whole force, to the quarter-house, on Charleston-neck. The defence of the country was given up, and the conquerors, who had lately carried their arms to the extremities of the state, seldom aimed at any thing more than to secure themselves, in the vicinity of the capital. The crops, which had been planted in the spring of the year, under British auspices, and with the expectation of affording them supplies, fell into the hands of the Americans, and administered to them a seasonable relief. The battle of Eutaw may be considered, as closing the national war, in South Carolina. A few excursions were afterwards made by the Brit-



ish, and sundry small enterprises were executed ; but nothing of more general consequence, than the loss of property, and of individual lives.

Thus ended the campaign of 1781, in South Carolina. At its commencement, the British were in force over all the state. At its close, they durst not, but with great precaution, venture twenty miles from Charleston. History affords but few instances of commanders, who have achieved so much, with equal means, as was done by general Greene, in the short space of a twelvemonth. He opened the campaign with gloomy prospects ; but closed it with glory. His unpaid and half-naked army had to contend with veteran soldiers, supplied with every thing that the wealth of Britain, or the plunder of Carolina could procure. Under all these disadvantages, he compelled superior numbers to retire from the extremity of the state, and confine themselves in the capital and its vicinity. Had not his mind been of the firmest texture, he would have been discouraged ; but his enemies found him as formidable, on the evening of a defeat, as on the morning after a victory.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

*Campaign of 1781. Operations in Virginia: Cornwallis captured: New London destroyed.*

IT has already been mentioned, that lord Cornwallis, soon after the battle of Guilford, marched to Wilmington, in North Carolina. When he had completed that march, various plans of operation were presented to his view. It was said, in favour of his proceeding southwardly, that the country between Wilmington and Camden was barren, and of difficult passage; that an embarkation for Charleston would be both tedious and disgraceful; and that a junction with the royal forces in Virginia, and the prosecution of solid operations in that quarter, would be the most effectual plan for effecting and securing the submission of the more southern states. Other arguments, apparently of equal force, urged his return to South Carolina. Previous to his departure for Virginia, he had received information, that Greene had begun his march for Camden; and he had reason, from past experience, to fear, that, if he did not follow him, the inhabitants, by a second revolt, would give the American army a superiority over the small force, left under lord Rawdon. Though his lordship was very apprehensive of danger from that quarter, he hoped either that lord Rawdon would be able to stand his ground, or that Greene would follow the royal army to Virginia; or, in the most unfavourable event, he flattered himself, that by the conquest of Virginia, the recovery of South Carolina would be at any time practicable. His lordship, having too much pride to turn back, and preferring the extensive scale of operations, which Virginia presented, to the narrow one of preserving past conquests, determined to leave Carolina to its fate. Before the end of April, he therefore proceeded on his march, from Wilmington towards Virginia. To favour the passage of the many rivers,

with which the country is intersected, two boats were mounted on carriages, and taken along with his army. The king's troops proceeded several days without opposition, and almost without intelligence. The Americans made an attempt at Swift-creek, and afterwards at Fishing-creek, to stop their progress; but without any effect. The British took the shortest road to Halifax; and, on their arrival there, defeated several parties of the Americans, and took some stores, with very little loss on their side. The Roanoke, the Meherrin, and the Nottaway rivers were successively crossed by the royal army, and with little or no opposition from the dispersed inhabitants. In less than a month, the march from Wilmington to Petersburg was completed. The latter had been fixed upon as the place of rendezvous, in a private correspondence with general Philips. By this combination of the royal force, previously employed in Virginia, with the troops which had marched from Wilmington, lord Cornwallis was at the head of a very powerful army. This junction was scarcely completed, when lord Cornwallis received lord Rawdon's report of the advantage he had gained over general Greene, at the siege of Ninety-Six. About the same time, he received information, that three British regiments had sailed from Cork for Charleston.

These two events eased his mind of all anxiety for South Carolina, and inspired him with brilliant hopes of a glorious campaign. He considered himself as having already subdued both the Carolinas, and as being in a fair way to increase his military fame, by the addition of Virginia to the list of his conquests. By the late combination of the royal forces, under Philips and Cornwallis, and by the recent arrival of a reinforcement of 1500 men, directly from New York, Virginia became the principal theatre of operations, for the remainder of the campaign. The formidable force, thus collected in one body, called for the vigorous exertions of the friends of independence. The defensive operations, in opposition to it, were principally entrusted to the marquis de la Fayette. Early in the year, he had been detached from the main American army on an expedition, the object of which was a co-opera-

tion with the French fleet, in capturing general Arnold. On the failure of this, the marquis marched back as far as the head of Elk. There he received an order to return to Virginia, to oppose the British forces, who had become more formidable, by the arrival of a considerable reinforcement, under general Philips. He proceeded without delay to Richmond, and arrived there the day before the British reached Manchester, on the opposite side of James river. The capital of Virginia, at that time filled with almost all the military stores of the state, was saved from imminent danger. So great was the superiority of numbers on the side of the British, that the marquis had before him a labour of the greatest difficulty, and was pressed with many embarrassments. In the first moments of the rising tempest, and till he could provide against its utmost rage, he began to retire with his little army, which consisted only of about 1000 regulars, 2000 militia, and sixty dragoons.

Lord Cornwallis advanced from Petersburg to James river, which he crossed at Westown, and thence, marching through Hanover county, crossed the South Anna or Pamunkey river. The marquis followed his motions, but at a guarded distance. The superiority of the British army, especially of their cavalry, which they easily supplied with good horses, from the stables and pastures of private gentlemen in Virginia, enabled them to traverse the country in all directions. Two distant expeditions were therefore undertaken. The one was to Charlotteville, with the view of capturing the governor and assembly of the state: the other to Point-of-Fork, to destroy stores. Lieutenant colonel Tarleton, to whom the first was committed, succeeded so far as to disperse the assembly, capture seven of its members, and to destroy a great quantity of stores, at and near Charlotteville. The other expedition, which was committed to lieutenant colonel Simcoe, was only in part successful; for the Americans had previously removed the most of their stores from Point-of-Fork. In the course of these marches and counter-marches, immense quantities of property were destroyed, and sundry unimportant skirmishes took place. The British made many



partial conquests; but these were seldom of longer duration than their encampments. The young marquis, with a degree of prudence that would have done honour to an old soldier, acted so cautiously on the defensive, made so judicious a choice of posts, and showed so much vigour and design in his movements, as to prevent any advantage being taken of him. In his circumstances, not to be destroyed, was triumph. He effected a junction, at Racoon-ford, with general Wayne, who was at the head of 800 Pennsylvanians. While this junction was forming, the British got between the American army and its stores, which had been removed from Richmond to Albemarle old court-house. The possession of these was an object with both armies. The marquis, by forced marches, got within a few miles of the British army, when they were two days march from Albemarle old court-house. The British general conceived it impracticable for the marquis to get between him and the stores, but by a road, in passing which, he might be attacked to advantage. The marquis extricated himself from this difficulty, by opening in the night a nearer road to Albemarle old court-house, which had been long disused, and was much embarrassed. To the surprise of lord Cornwallis, the marquis fixed himself, the next day, between the British army and the American stores. Lord Cornwallis, finding his schemes frustrated, fell back to Richmond. About this time, the marquis's army was reinforced by Steuben's troops, and by militia from the parts adjacent. He followed lord Cornwallis, and had the address to impress him with an idea, that the American army was much greater than it really was. His lordship therefore retreated to Williamsburg. The day after the main body of the British army arrived there, their rear was attacked by an American light corps, under colonel Butler, and sustained a considerable loss.

About the time lord Cornwallis reached Williamsburg, he received intelligence, from New York, setting forth the danger to which the royal army in that city was exposed, from a combined attack, that was said to be threatened by the French and Americans. Sir Henry Clinton, therefore, required a

detachment from earl Cornwallis, if he were not engaged in any important enterprise; and recommended to him a healthy station, with an ample defensive force, till the danger of New York was dispersed. Lord Cornwallis, thinking it expedient to comply with this requisition, and judging that his command afterwards would not be adequate to maintain his present position at Williamsburg, determined to retire to Portsmouth. It was therefore necessary to cross James river. The marquis de la Fayette, conceiving this to be a favourable opportunity for acting offensively, advanced on the British. General Wayne, relying on the information of a countryman, that the main body of the British had crossed James river, pushed forwards, with 800 light troops, to harass their rear. Contrary to his expectations, he found the whole British army drawn up ready to oppose him. He instantly conceived, that the best mode of extricating himself from his perilous situation, would be to assume a bold countenance, and engage his adversaries before he attempted to retreat. He therefore pressed on for some time, and urged an attack with spirit, before he fell back. Lord Cornwallis, perhaps suspecting an ambuscade, did not pursue. By this bold manœuvre, Wayne got off with but little loss.

In the course of these various movements, the British were joined by few of the inhabitants, and scarcely by any of the natives. The Virginians, for the most part, either joined the Americans, or, what was much more common, kept out of the way of the British. To purchase safety by submission was the policy of very few; and these were for the most part natives of Britain. After earl Cornwallis had crossed James river, he marched for Portsmouth. He had previously taken the necessary steps, for complying with the requisition of sir Henry Clinton, to send a part of his command to New York. But before they sailed, an express arrived, from sir Henry Clinton with a letter, expressing his preference of Williamsburg to Portsmouth, for the residence of the army, and his desire that Old-Point-Comfort, or Hampton road should be secured, as a station for line of battle ships. The com-

mander in chief, at the same time, allowed his lordship to detain any part or the whole of the forces, under his command, for completing this service. On examination, Hampton road was not approved of as a station for the navy. It being a principal object of the campaign, to fix on a strong, permanent post or place of arms, in the Chesapeake, for the security of both the army and navy, York-town and Gloucester Points were considered as most likely to answer that purpose. Portsmouth was therefore evacuated, and its garrison transferred to York-town. Lord Cornwallis availed himself of sir Henry Clinton's permission, to retain the whole force under his command, and, impressed with the necessity of establishing a strong place of arms, in the Chesapeake, applied himself with industry to fortify his new posts, so as to render them tenable, against any force that was likely to be brought against them.

At this period, the officers of the British navy expected their fleet, in the West Indies, to join them; and that solid operations in Virginia, would shortly re-commence, with increased vigour.

While they were indulging these hopes, count de Grasse, with a French fleet of twenty-eight sail of the line, from the West Indies, entered the Chesapeake; and, about the same time, intelligence arrived, that the French and American armies, which had been stationed in the more northern states, were advancing towards Virginia. Count de Grasse, without loss of time, blocked up York river, with three large ships and some frigates; and moored the principal part of his fleet in Lynhaven-bay. Three thousand two hundred French troops, commanded by the marquis de St. Simon, were disembarked, and formed a junction with the continental troops, under the marquis de la Fayette; and the whole took post at Williamsburg. An attack on this force was intended; but before all the arrangements, subservient to its execution, were fixed upon, letters of an early date, in September, were received by Lord Cornwallis from sir Henry Clinton, announcing that he would do his utmost to reinforce the royal army in the Chesapeake, or make every diversion in his

power; and that admiral Digby was hourly expected on the coast. On the receipt of this intelligence, earl Cornwallis, not thinking himself justified in hazarding an engagement, abandoned the resolution of attacking the combined force of Fayette and St. Simon. It is the province of history to relate what has happened, and not to indulge conjectures in the boundless field of contingencies; otherwise, it might be added, that earl Cornwallis, by this change of opinion, lost a favourable opportunity of extricating himself from a combination of hostile force, which, by further concentration, soon became irresistible. On the other hand, if an unsuccessful attack had been made, he would have been charged with rashness, in not waiting for the promised co-operation. On the same uncertain ground of conjecturing what ought to have been done, it might be said, that the knowledge earl Cornwallis had of public affairs would have justified him in abandoning York-town, in order to return to South Carolina. It seems as though this would have been his wisest plan; but, either from an opinion that his instructions to stand his ground were positive, or that effectual relief was probable, his lordship thought proper to risk every thing on the issue of a siege. An attempt was made to burn or dislodge the French ships in the river; but none to evacuate his posts, at an early period, when that measure was practicable.

Admiral Greaves, with twenty sail of the line, made an effort for the relief of lord Cornwallis; but without effecting his purpose. When he appeared off the capes of Virginia, count de Grasse went out to meet him, and an indecisive engagement took place. The British were willing to renew the action; but de Grasse, for good reasons, declined it. His chief object, in going out of the capes, was to cover a French fleet of eight line of battle ships, which was expected from Rhode Island. In conformity to a preconcerted plan, count de Barras, commander of this fleet, had sailed for the Chesapeake, about the time de Grasse sailed from the West Indies for the same place. To avoid the British fleet, he had taken a circuit by Bermuda. Fearing that the British fleet might intercept him on his approach to the capes of Vir-



ginia, de Grasse came out to be at hand for his protection. While Greaves and de Grasse were manœuvring, near the mouth of the Chesapeake, count de Barras passed the former in the night, and got within the capes of Virginia. This gave the fleet of his most Christian majesty a decided superiority. Admiral Greaves soon took his departure, and de Grasse re-entered the Chesapeake. All this time, conformably to the well-digested plan of the campaign, the French and American forces were marching through the middle states, on their way to York-town. To understand, in their proper connexion, the great events shortly to be described, it is necessary to go back and trace the remote causes, which brought on this grand combination of fleets and armies, that put a period to the war.

The fall of Charleston, in May, 1780, and the complete rout of the American southern army, in August following, together with the increasing inability of the Americans to carry on the war, gave a serious alarm to the friends of independence. In this low ebb of their affairs, a pathetic statement of their distresses was made to their illustrious ally, the king of France. To give greater efficacy to their solicitations, congress appointed lieutenant colonel John Laurens their special minister, and directed him, after repairing to the court of Versailles, to urge the necessity of speedy and effectual succour; and, in particular, to solicit a loan of money, and the co-operation of a French fleet, in attempting some important enterprise against the common enemy. His great abilities as an officer had been often displayed; but, on this occasion, the superior talents of the statesman and negociator were called forth into action. Animated as he was, with the ardour of the warmest patriotism, and feeling most sensibly for the distresses of his country, his whole soul was exerted, to interest the court of France, in giving a vigorous aid to their allies. His engaging manners, and insinuating address, procured a favourable reception to his representations. He won the hearts of those who were at the helm of public affairs, and inflamed them with zeal, to assist a country, whose cause was so ably pleaded, and whose suf-

ferings were so pathetically represented. At this crisis, his most Christian majesty gave his American allies, a subsidy of six millions of livres, and became their security for ten millions more, borrowed for their use in the United Netherlands. A naval co-operation was promised, and a conjunct expedition against their common foes was projected.

The American war was now so far involved in the consequences of naval operations, that a superior French fleet, seemed to be the only hinge, on which it was likely soon to take a favourable turn. The British army, being parcelled in the different sea ports of the United States, any division of it, blocked up by a French fleet, could not long resist the superior combined force, which might be brought to operate against it. The marquis de Castries, who directed the marine of France, with great precision, calculated the naval force, which the British could concentrate on the coast of the United States; and disposed his own, in such a manner, as ensured him a superiority. In conformity to these principles, and in subserviency to the design of the campaign, de Grasse sailed in March, 1781, from Brest, with twenty-five sail of the line, several thousand land forces, and a large convoy, amounting to more than two hundred ships. A small part of this force was destined for the East Indies; but de Grasse, with the greater part, sailed for Martinique. The British fleet, then in the West Indies, had been previously weakened, by the departure of a squadron for the protection of the ships, which were employed in carrying to England the booty, which had been taken at St. Eustatia. The British admirals, Hood and Drake, were detached to intercept the outward bound French fleet, commanded by de Grasse; but a junction between his force and eight ships of the line, and one of fifty guns, which were previously at Martinique and St. Domingo, was nevertheless effected. By this combination of fresh ships from Europe, with the French fleet previously in the West Indies, they had a decided superiority. Count de Grasse, having finished his business in the West Indies, sailed, in the beginning of August, with a prodigious convoy. After seeing this out of danger, he directed his

course for the Chesapeake, and arrived there, as has been related, on the thirtieth of the same month. Five days before his arrival in the Chesapeake, the French fleet sailed from Rhode Island, for the same place. These fleets, notwithstanding their original distance from the scene of action, and from each other, coincided in their operations in an extraordinary manner, far beyond the reach of military calculation. They all tended to one object, at one and the same time, and that object was neither known nor suspected by the British, till the proper season for counteraction was elapsed. This coincidence of favourable circumstances extended to the marches of the French and American land forces. The plan of operations had been so well digested, and was so faithfully executed by the different commanders, that general Washington and count de Rochambeau had passed the British head quarters, in New York, and were considerably advanced, on their way to York-town, before count de Grasse had reached the American coast. This was effected in the following manner.

Monsr. de Barras, appointed to the command of the French squadron, at Newport, arrived at Boston, with despatches for count de Rochambeau. An interview soon afterwards took place, at Weathersfield, between generals Washington, Knox, and du Portail, on the part of the Americans, and count de Rochambeau, and the chevalier Chastellux, on the part of the French. At this interview, an eventual plan of the whole campaign was fixed. This was to lay siege to New York, in concert with a French fleet, which was to arrive on the coast, in the month of August. It was agreed, that the French troops should march towards the North River. Letters were addressed by Washington to the executive officers of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut and New Jersey, requiring them to fill up their battalions, and to have their quotas of 6200 militia in readiness, within a week of the time they might be called for. Conformably to these outlines of the campaign, the French troops marched from Rhode Island in June; and early in the following month, joined the American army. About the time this junction took place,

Washington marched his army from their winter encampment near Peekskill, to the vicinity of Kingsbridge. General Lincoln fell down the North River with a detachment in boats, and took possession of the ground where Fort Independence formerly stood. An attack was made upon him; but was soon discontinued. The British, about this time, retired with almost the whole of their force, to York-Island. Washington hoped to be able to commence operations against New York, about the middle, or, at furthest, the latter end of July. Flat-bottomed boats, sufficient to transport five thousand men, were built near Albany, and brought down Hudson's river, to the neighbourhood of the American army, before New York. Ovens were erected opposite to Staten Island, for the use of the French troops. Every movement was made, which was introductory to the commencement of the siege. It was not a little mortifying to Washington, to find himself, on the 2d of August, only a few hundreds stronger, than he was, on the day his army first moved from their winter quarters. To have fixed on a plan of operations, with a foreign officer, at the head of a respectable force; to have brought that force from a considerable distance, in confident expectation of reinforcements, sufficiently large to commence effective operations against the common enemy; and, at the same time, to have engagements, in behalf of the states, violated in direct opposition to their own interest, and in a manner derogatory to his personal honour, was enough to have excited storms and tempests, in any mind less calm than his. He bore this hard trial with his usual magnanimity, and contented himself with repeating his requisitions to the states; and, at the same time, urged them by every tie, to enable him to fulfil engagements, entered into on their account, with the commander of the French troops.

That tardiness of the states, which at other times had brought them near the brink of ruin, was now the accidental cause of real service. Had they sent forward their recruits for the regular army, and their quotas of militia, as was expected, the siege of New York would have commenced, in the latter end of July, or early in August. While the season



was wasting away, in expectation of these reinforcements, lord Cornwallis fixed himself near the capes of Virginia. His situation there, the arrival of a reinforcement of 3000 Germans from Europe at New York, the superior strength of that garrison, the failure of the states in filling up their battalions, and embodying their militia, and especially recent intelligence from count de Grasse, that his destination was fixed for the Chesapeake, concurred, about the middle of August, to make a total change of the plan of the campaign.

The appearance of an intention to attack New York was nevertheless kept up. While this deception was played off, the allied army crossed the North River, and passed on, by the way of Philadelphia, through the intermediate country, to York-town. An attempt to reduce the British force, in Virginia, promised success with more expedition, and to secure an object of nearly equal importance, as the reduction of New York.

While the attack of New York was in serious contemplation, a letter from general Washington, detailing the particulars of the intended operations of the campaign, being intercepted, fell into the hands of sir Henry Clinton. After the plan was changed, the royal commander was so much influenced by the intelligence contained in the intercepted letter, that he believed every movement towards Virginia to be a feint, calculated to draw off his attention from the defence of New York. Under the influence of this opinion, he bent his whole force to strengthen that post, and suffered the French and American armies to pass him, without any molestation. When the best opportunity of striking at them was elapsed, then, for the first time, he was brought to believe, that the allies had fixed on Virginia, for the theatre of their combined operations. As truth may be made to answer the purposes of deception, so no feint of attacking New York could have been more successful than the real intention.

In the latter end of August, the American army began their march to Virginia, from the neighbourhood of New York. Washington had advanced as far as Chester, before he received information of the arrival of de Grasse. The

French troops marched at the same time, and for the same place. In the course of this summer, they passed through all the extensive settlements, which lie between Newport and York-town. It seldom, if ever, happened before, that an army, led through a foreign country, at so great a distance from their own, among a people of different principles, customs, language, and religion, behaved with so much regularity. In their march to York-town, they had to pass through five hundred miles of a country, abounding in fruit, and, at a time, when the most delicious productions of nature, growing on and near the public highways, presented both opportunity and temptation to gratify their appetites. Yet, so complete was their discipline, that, in this long march, scarce an instance could be produced of a peach or an apple being taken, without the consent of the inhabitants. Washington and Rochambeau reached Williamsburg on the 14th of September. They, with generals Chastellux, Du Portail, and Knox, visited count de Grasse, on board his ship, the *Ville de Paris*, and agreed on a plan of operations.

The count afterwards wrote to Washington, that, in case a British fleet appeared, "he conceived he ought to go out, and meet them at sea, instead of risking an engagement in a confined situation." This alarmed Washington. He sent the marquis de la Fayette, with a letter, to dissuade him from the dangerous measure. This letter, and the persuasions of the marquis, had the desired effect.

The combined forces proceeded on their way to York-town, partly by land, and partly down the Chesapeake. The whole, together with a body of Virginia militia, under the command of general Nelson, amounting in the aggregate to 12,000 men, rendezvoused at Williamsburg, on the 25th of September; and, in five days afterwards, moved down to the investiture of York-town. The French fleet, at the same time, moved to the mouth of York river, and took a position, calculated to prevent lord Cornwallis, either from retreating, or receiving succour by water. Previously to the march from Williamsburg to York-town, Washington published, in general orders, as follows: "If the enemy should be tempted

to meet the army on its march, the general particularly enjoins the troops to place their principal reliance on the bayonet, that they may prove the vanity of the boast, which the British make of their peculiar prowess, in deciding battles with that weapon."

The combined army halted in the evening, about two miles from York-town, and lay on their arms all night. On the next day, colonel Scammell, an officer of uncommon merit, and of the most amiable manners, in approaching the outer works of the British, was mortally wounded and taken prisoner. About this time, Cornwallis received a letter from sir Henry Clinton, announcing the arrival of admiral Digby, with three ships of the line, from Europe, and the determination of the general and flag officers in New York, to embark five thousand men in a fleet, which would probably sail on the 5th of October; that this fleet consisted of twenty-three sail of the line; and that joint exertions of the navy and army would be made for his relief. On the night after the receipt of this intelligence, Cornwallis quitted his outward position, and retired to one more inward.

The works, erected for the security of York-town on the right, were redoubts and batteries, with a line of stockade in the rear. A marshy ravine lay in front of the right, over which was placed a large redoubt. The morass extended along the centre, which was defended by a line of stockade, and by batteries. On the left of the centre was a horn-work, with a ditch, a row of fraize, and an abbatis. Two redoubts were advanced before the left. The combined forces advanced and took possession of the ground, from which the British had retired. About this time, the legion cavalry and mounted infantry passed over the river to Gloucester. General de Choisy invested the British post on that side so fully, as to cut off all communication between it and the country. In the meantime, the royal army was straining every nerve to strengthen their works; and their artillery was constantly employed, in impeding the operations of the combined army. On the 9th and 10th of October, the French and Americans opened their batteries. They kept up a brisk and well-directed

fire, from heavy cannon, mortars, and howitzers. The shells of the besiegers reached the ships in the harbour. The *Charon*, of 44 guns, and a transport ship, were burned. On the 10th, a messenger arrived with a despatch from sir Henry Clinton to Cornwallis, dated on the 30th of September; which stated various circumstances, tending to lessen the probability of relief being afforded by a direct movement from New York.

The besiegers commenced their second parallel, two hundred yards from the works of the besieged. Two redoubts, advanced on the left of the British, greatly impeded the progress of the combined armies. It was therefore proposed to carry them by storm. To excite a spirit of emulation, the reduction of the one was committed to the French, of the other to the Americans. The latter, led by colonels Hamilton and Laurens, marched to the assault with unloaded muskets. Having passed the abbatis and palisades, they attacked on all sides, and carried the redoubt, in a few minutes, with the loss of nine killed, and thirty-three wounded. "Incapable of imitating examples of barbarity, and forgetting recent provocations, they spared every man who ceased to resist." Eight of the British were killed, one hundred and twenty captured, and a few escaped. The French were equally successful, on their part. They carried the redoubt assigned to them with rapidity: but, being opposed by a greater number of men, their loss amounted to nearly one hundred men. These two redoubts were included in the second parallel, and facilitated the subsequent operations of the besiegers.

The British could not with propriety risk repeated sallies. One was projected at this time, with four hundred men, commanded by lieutenant colonel Abercrombie. He proceeded so far as to force two redoubts, and to spike eleven pieces of cannon. Though the officers and soldiers displayed great bravery in this enterprise, yet their success produced no essential advantage. The cannon were soon unspiked and rendered fit for service.

By this time, the batteries of the besiegers were covered with nearly a hundred pieces of heavy ordnance, and the



works of the besieged were so damaged, that they could scarcely show a single gun. Lord Cornwallis had now no hope left, but in offering terms of capitulation, or attempting an escape. He determined on the latter. Boats were prepared to receive the troops in the night, and to transport them to Gloucester-Point. After one whole embarkation had crossed, a violent storm of wind and rain dispersed the boats, and frustrated the whole scheme. The royal army, thus weakened by division, was exposed to increased danger.

Orders were sent to those who had passed, to re-cross the river to York-town. With the failure of this scheme, the last hope of the British army expired. Longer resistance could answer no good purpose, and might occasion the loss of many valuable lives. Lord Cornwallis, therefore, wrote a letter to Washington, requesting a cessation of arms for twenty-four hours, and that commissioners might be appointed to digest articles of capitulation. While lieutenant-colonel Laurens, the officer employed by Washington, on this occasion, was discussing these articles, his father was closely confined in the tower of London, of which Cornwallis was constable. By this singular combination of circumstances, his lordship became a prisoner, through the agency of the son of his own prisoner.

The posts of York and Gloucester were surrendered on the 19th of October, by a capitulation, the principal articles of which were as follow: The troops to be prisoners of war to congress, and the naval force to France; the officers to retain their side arms and private property of every kind; but all property, obviously belonging to the inhabitants of the United States, to be subject to be re-claimed; the soldiers to be kept in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania, and to be supplied with the same rations, as were allowed to soldiers in the service of congress; a proportion of the officers to march into the country with the prisoners; the rest to be allowed to proceed on parole to Europe, to New York, or to any other American maritime post, in possession of the British. The honour of marching out with colours flying, which had been refused to general Lincoln, on his giving up Charleston, was now refused to Corn-

wallis; and general Lincoln was appointed to receive the submission of the royal army, at York-town, precisely in the same way his own had been conducted, about eighteen months before. Cornwallis endeavoured to obtain permission for the British and German troops to return to their respective countries, under no other restrictions than an engagement, not to serve against France or America. He also tried to obtain an indemnity for those of the inhabitants, who had joined him; but he was obliged to recede from the former, and also to consent, that the loyalists in his camp, should be given up, to the unconditional mercy of their countrymen. His lordship, nevertheless, obtained permission for the Bonetta sloop of war, to pass unexamined to New York. This gave an opportunity of screening such of them, as were most obnoxious to the Americans.

The regular troops of France and America, employed in this siege, consisted of about 7000 of the former, and 5500 of the latter; and they were assisted by about 4000 militia. On the part of the combined army about 300 were killed or wounded. On the part of the British, about 500; and seventy were taken in the two redoubts, which had been carried by assault. The troops of every kind, that surrendered prisoners of war, exceeded 7000 men; but so great was the number of sick and wounded, that there were only 3800 capable of bearing arms.

The French and American engineers and artillery merited and received the highest applause. Brigadiers general Du Portail and Knox were both promoted to the rank of major generals, on account of their meritorious services. Lieutenant-colonel Gouvion and captain Rochefontaine, of the corps of engineers, respectively, received brevets, the former to the rank of colonel, and the latter to the rank of major.

Congress honoured Washington, Rochambeau, de Grasse, and the officers of the different corps, and the men under them, with thanks for their services, in the reduction of Cornwallis. The whole project was conceived with profound wisdom, and the incidents of it had been combined with singular pro-

priety. It is not therefore wonderful, that from the remarkable coincidence in all its parts, it was crowned with unvaried success.

A British fleet and an army of 7000 men, destined for the relief of Cornwallis, arrived off the Chesapeake on the 24th of October; but, on receiving advice of his lordship's surrender, they returned to Sandy-hook, and New York.

Such was the fate of that general, from whose gallantry and previous successes, the speedy conquest of the southern states had been so confidently expected. No event, during the war, bid fairer for oversetting the independence of at least a part of the confederacy, than his complete victory near Camden; but, by the consequences of that action, his lordship became the occasion of rendering that a revolution, which, from his previous success, was in danger of terminating in a rebellion. The loss of his army may be considered as the closing scene of the continental war, in North America.

The troops, under the command of Cornwallis, had spread waste and ruin over the face of all the country, for four hundred miles on the sea coast, and for two hundred miles to the westward. Their marches from Charleston to Camden, from Camden to the river Dan, from the Dan through North Carolina to Wilmington, from Wilmington to Petersburg, and from Petersburg through many parts of Virginia, till they finally settled in York-town, made a route of more than eleven hundred miles. Every place, through which they passed in these various marches, experienced the effects of their rapacity. Their numbers enabled them to go where they pleased; their rage for plunder disposed them to take whatever they had the means of removing; and their animosity to the Americans led them, often, to the wanton destruction of what they could neither use, nor carry off. By their means, thousands had been involved in distress. The reduction of such an army occasioned unusual transports of joy, in the breasts of the whole body of the people. Well authenticated testimony asserts, that the nerves of some were so agitated as to produce convulsions, and that, at least, one

man expired under the tide of pleasure which flowed in upon him, when informed of his lordship's surrender.\* The people throughout the United States displayed a social triumph and exultation, which no private prosperity is ever able fully to inspire. General Washington ordered, "that those who were under arrest should be pardoned, and set at liberty." His orders closed as follows: "Divine service shall be performed to-morrow, in the different brigades and divisions. The commander in chief recommends, that all the troops, not upon duty, do assist at it, with a serious deportment, and that sensibility of heart, which the recollection of the surprising and particular interposition of Providence in our favour claims." Congress, on receiving the official account of the great events, which had taken place at York-town, resolved to go in procession to church, and return public thanks to Almighty God, for the advantages they had gained. They also issued a proclamation, for "religiously observing, through the United States, the 13th of December, as a day of thanksgiving and prayer." The singularly interesting event, of capturing a second royal army, produced strong emotions, which broke out in all the variety of ways, with which the most rapturous joy usually displays itself.

While the combined armies were advancing to the siege of York-town, an excursion was made from New York, attended with no small loss to the Americans. Arnold, who had lately returned from Virginia, was appointed to conduct an expedition, the object of which was the town of New London, in his native country. The troops employed therein were landed in two detachments, on each side of the harbour. The one was commanded by lieutenant colonel Eyre, and the other by Arnold. The latter met with little opposition. Fort Trumbull, and a redoubt which was intended to cover the harbour, not being tenable, were evacuated, and the men crossed the river to Fort Griswold, on Groton-hill. This was furiously attacked by Eyre. The garrison defended them-

\* The door-keeper of congress, an aged man, died suddenly, on hearing of the capture of Cornwallis's army. His death was universally ascribed to a violent emotion of political joy.



selves with great resolution; but, after a severe conflict of forty minutes, the fort was carried by the assailants. The Americans had not more than six or seven men killed, when the British carried their lines; but a severe execution took place afterwards, though resistance had ceased. An officer of the conquering troops inquired, on his entering the fort, who commanded. Colonel Ledyard answered, "I did; but you do now:" and presented him his sword. The colonel was immediately run through the body and killed. Between thirty and forty were wounded; and about forty were carried off prisoners. On the side of the British, forty-eight were killed, and one hundred and forty-five wounded. Among the latter was major Montgomery, and among the former was colonel Eyre. About fifteen vessels, loaded with the effects of the inhabitants, retreated up the river, and four others remained in the harbour unhurt; but all excepting these were burned, by the communication of fire from the burning stores. Sixty dwelling-houses, and eighty-four stores, were reduced to ashes. The loss, which the Americans sustained by the destruction of naval stores, of provisions, and merchandise, was immense. Arnold, having completed the object of the expedition, returned, in eight days, to New York. The Americans lost many valuable men, and much of their possessions, by this incursion; but the cause for which they contended was uninjured. Expeditions, which seemed to have no higher object, than the destruction of property, alienated their affections still further from the British government. They were not so extensive as to answer the ends of conquest; and the momentary impression resulting from them produced no lasting intimidation. On the other hand, they excited a spirit of revenge, against the authors of such accumulated distresses.

The year 1781 terminated, in all parts of the United States, in favour of the Americans. It began with weakness in Carolina, mutiny in New Jersey, and devastation in Virginia. Nevertheless, in its close, the British were confined to their strong holds, in or near New York, Charleston, and Savannah; and their whole army in Virginia was captured.

They, in the course of the year, had acquired much plunder, by which individuals were enriched; but by which their nation was in no respect benefited. The whole campaign passed away, on their part, without one valuable conquest, or the acquisition of any post or place, from which higher purposes were answered, than destroying public stores, distressing individuals, and enriching the officers and privates of their army and navy. The important services rendered by France, to the Americans, cemented the union of the two nations with additional ties. The orderly, inoffensive behaviour of the French troops, in the United States, contrasted with the havoc of property made by the British, in their marches and excursions, was silently turning the current of popular esteem in favour of the former, and working a revolution in the minds of the inhabitants, greatly conducive to the establishment of that which had taken place in the government. The property of the inhabitants of Rhode Island received no damage, of any account, from the French troops, during their eleven months residence among them. The soldiers were rather a guard than a nuisance. The citizens met with no interruption, when prosecuting their lawful business, either by night or day; and were treated with every mark of attention and respect. While the progress of the British army, in a circuitous march of eleven hundred miles, from Charleston to York-town, was marked with rapine and desolation; the march of the French troops, from Rhode Island to the same place, a distance nearly equal, in a right line, was productive of no inconvenience to the intermediate inhabitants. They were welcome guests wherever they came; for they took nothing by fraud or force; but punctually paid, in gold or silver, for all they wanted. In a contest, on the final issue of which the good-will of the people had so powerful an influence, such opposite modes of conduct could not fail of producing their natural effects. The moderation and justice of the French met with its reward, in the general good-will of the people; but the violence and rapine of the British contributed, among other things, to work the final overthrow of their schemes in America.

On the last day of December, 1781, Henry Laurens was released from his long confinement, in the tower of London. He had been committed there, as already related, on the 6th of October, 1780, "on suspicion of high treason." The commitment was accompanied with a warrant, to the lieutenant of the tower to receive and confine him. Their lordships' orders were, "to confine him a close prisoner; to be locked up every night; to be in the custody of two warders; not to suffer him to be out of their sight one moment, day or night; to allow him no liberty of speaking to any person; nor to permit any person to speak to him; to deprive him of the use of pen and ink; to suffer no letter to be brought to him; nor any to go from him." Mr. Laurens was then fifty-six years old, and severely afflicted with the gout. In this situation, he was conducted to apartments in the tower, and was shut up in two small rooms, which, together, made about twenty feet square; with a warder for his constant companion, and a fixed bayonet under his window; without any friend to converse with; and without any prospect or even the means of correspondence. After a month's confinement, he was permitted to walk out on limited ground; but a warder, with a sword in his hand, followed close behind. This indulgence was occasionally taken, for about three weeks, when lord George Gordon, who was also a prisoner in the tower, unluckily met and asked Mr. Laurens to walk with him. Mr. Laurens declined the offer, and instantly returned to his apartment. Governor Gore caught at this transgression of orders, and locked him up for thirty-seven days; though the attending warder exculpated him from all blame.

About this time, an old friend and mercantile correspondent, having solicited the secretaries of state for Mr. Laurens's enlargement on parole, and having offered his whole fortune as security for his good conduct, sent him the following message: "Their lordships say, if you will point out any thing for the benefit of Great Britain, in the present dispute with the colonies, you shall be enlarged." This proposition filled him with indignation, and provoked a sharp reply.

The same friend soon afterwards visited Mr. Laurens, and being left alone with him, addressed him as follows: "I converse with you this morning, not particularly as your friend, but as the friend of Great Britain. I have certain propositions to make for obtaining your liberty, which I advise you should take time to consider." Mr. Laurens desired to know what they were, and added, "that an honest man required no time to give an answer, in a case where his honour was concerned." "If," said he, "the secretaries of state will enlarge me upon parole, I will strictly conform to my engagement, to do nothing, directly or indirectly, to the hurt of this kingdom. I will return to America, or remain in any part of England, which may be assigned, and surrender myself when demanded." It was answered: "No, sir, you must stay in London among your friends. The ministers will often have occasion to send for, and consult you. You can write two or three lines to the ministers, and barely say you are sorry for what is past. A pardon will be granted. Every man has been wrong, at some time or other of his life, and should not be ashamed to acknowledge it." Mr. Laurens replied, "I will never subscribe to my own infamy, and to the dishonour of my children." He was then told of long and painful confinement; and hints were thrown out of the possible consequences of his refusal. To which he replied: "I am afraid of no consequences, but such as would flow from dishonourable acts."

About this time lieutenant-colonel John Laurens, the eldest son of Henry Laurens, arrived in France, as the special minister of congress. The father was requested to write to the son, to withdraw himself from the court of France; and assurances were given, that it would operate in his favour. To these requests he replied: "My son is of age, and has a will of his own. If I should write to him, in the terms you request, it would have no effect. He would only conclude, that confinement and persuasion had softened me. I know him to be a man of honour. He loves me dearly, and would lay down his life to save mine; but I am sure he would not sacrifice his honour to save my life; and I applaud him."



As the year 1781 drew near a close, Mr. Laurens's sufferings in the tower became generally known, and excited compassion in his favour, and odium against the authors of his confinement. It had been also found, by the inefficacy of many attempts, that no concessions could be obtained from him. It was therefore resolved, to release him; but difficulties arose about the mode. Mr. Laurens would not consent to any act, which implied that he was a British subject; and he had been committed as such, on charge of high treason. Ministers to extricate themselves from this difficulty, at length, proposed to take bail for his appearance, at the court of King's Bench. When the words of the recognizance, "our sovereign lord the king," were read to Mr. Laurens, he replied, in open court, "not my sovereign;" and, with this declaration, he, with Mr. Oswald and Mr. Anderson, as his securities, entered into an obligation for his appearance, at the court of King's Bench, the next Easter Term; and for not departing thence, without the leave of the court. Thus ended a long and a painful farce. Mr. Laurens was immediately released. When the time for his appearance at court drew near, he was not only discharged from all obligations to attend, but requested, by lord Shelburne, to go to the continent, in subserviency to a scheme for making peace with America. Mr. Laurens was startled at the idea of being released, without any equivalent, as he had uniformly held himself a prisoner of war. From an unwillingness to be brought under an apparent obligation, he replied, that, "he durst not accept himself as a gift; and that as congress had once offered lieutenant-general Burgoyne for him, he had no doubt of their now giving lieutenant-general earl Cornwallis for the same person."

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